Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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3 January 1991

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Inter-Arab Affairs

Coverage of Libya-Syria-Egypt Meeting in Cairo

Abd-al-Majid Comments

NC0201150991 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1426 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Cairo, 2 Jan (MENA)—Speaking at the end of the second meeting among the foreign ministers of Egypt, Libya, and Syria today, Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, noted that various aspects of the situation in the Middle East, particularly developments in the Gulf crisis, had been discussed.

He said it was agreed to continue the consultations among the three countries so as to achieve the pan-Arab goals.

'Diplomatic Source' Comments

NC0201160391 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] A responsible diplomatic source has said that the tripartite meetings under way among various Arab parties in Cairo are aimed at continuing the review of developments in the Gulf. The meetings, the source added, are also intended to enable these parties to explain their views on and interpretation of these developments.

The source noted that this exchange of information and views allows a clearer picture to be formed, which helps define the stands on the basis of which the Arab move must be conducted for the good of the Arab nation.

The source concluded his statement by saying that the rapid pace of developments in the Gulf crisis requires that these developments be examined promptly and followed up on so that the maximum degree of stability can be achieved when adopting the necessary resolutions on these developments.

Discussions Reviewed

NC0201171091 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1534 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Cairo, 2 Jan (MENA)—Dr. Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the president's office for political affairs, has announced that the date for the Egyptian-Syrian-Libyan summit will be set by the heads of the three countries.

MENA has learned that the the three countries' foreign ministers will submit reports to their leaders on the talks they held today.

Today's meetings of the foreign ministers of Egypt, Syria, and Libya centered on an exchange of views, allowing each side to present its position on developments in the international arena and the Middle East. Emphasis was placed on the continuation of (?coordination) and consultation to reach a peaceful solution to the Iraqi-Kuwaiti (?dispute) to serve the Arab nation's interests.

Syrian Minister Departs

NC0201161991 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1529 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Cairo, 2 Jan (MENA)—Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' left Cairo this afternoon at the end of a two-day visit to Egypt during which he attended the meetings of the foreign ministers of Egypt, Syria, and Libya.

He was seen off at the airport by Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister.

Libyan Official Departs

NC0201173091 Cairo MENA in English 1709 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Cairo, Jan 2 (MENA)—Ibrahim Muhammad al-Bishari, head of the Libyan People's Office for Foreign Relations [name and title as received], left here today after participating in the tripartite ministrial meeting held here today and attended also by Egyptian and Syrian foreign ministers.

Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid saw the Libyan official off.

Arab League Official Resigns Over Cairo Move

JN0201145991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1340 GMT 2 Jan 90

[Text] Tunis, 2 Jan (INA)—The Arab League assistant secretary general has announced his official resignation in protest against the transfer of the Arab League headquarters to Cairo through twisted and illegal means.

In a memorandum submitted to the acting Arab League secretary general today, Arab League Assistant Secretary General Salah al-Mukhtar stated that the exploitation of the League by the rulers of Najd and Hejaz [Saudi Arabia] and Egypt to realize colonial objectives by passing resolutions in its name—resolutions meant to serve as a cover for striking at Iraq by the U.S.-Atlantic troops—prompts every honorable Arab committed to the principles of struggle to act as a soldier in the army of the Arab and Islamic nation in defense of honor and dignity.

Al-Mukhtar added: I announce my resignation, refusing to turn into a cover for the dirtiest conspiracy in our contemporary history. Besides, I refuse to work with an Arab League largely influenced by trivial elements who are agents of colonial powers and Zionism, such as Husni, Fahd, and others.

The assistant secretary general added in his resignation memorandum: Remaining in the Arab League is no longer necessary now that Fahd and Husni have provided all the justifications for internationalizing the Gulf crisis and have made the Arab party subservient to the United States, lacking in will and without a voice, a mere tool that cannot even open its mouth.

Al-Mukhtar asserted that the United States exploited the weakness, languor, and breakdown of the rulers of Egypt and the Arabian Peninsula and pushed them to the fore to stand against Iraq, since the nature of the current confrontation shows that Fahd and Husni are no more than trivial tools in the hands of the U.S. Administration.

The Arab League assistant secretary general warned that by moving the Arab League to Cairo before the end of the year 1990, Fahd and Husni sought to use it to pass new resolutions sanctioning the shedding of Iraqi blood and providing a new cover for the launching of a hostile U.S. war against Iraq and the Arab nation.

It is to be recalled that former Arab League Secretary General Chedli Klibi tendered his resignation in August in protest against division within the League's ranks and also because the League was turned into a servile vassal to the U.S. Administration.

New Official Assumes Post

NC0201182691 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1748 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Cairo, 2 Jan (MENA)—Ambassador Ahmad 'Adil today assumed his post as Arab League assistant secretary general. He is the first Egyptian assistant secretary general to be appointed since the Arab League secretariat general returned to Cairo.

Ambassador Ahmad 'Adil had served as general commissioner for the Arab League until November 1989. He also served as Egyptian ambassador in various capitals, the most recent of which was the Vatican, and as director of the diplomatic and consular section at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry.

Arab League Concludes Move to Cairo 1 Jan

LD0201195291 London KUNA in Arabic 1845 GMT 2 Jan 90

[Excerpt] Tunis, 2 Jan (KUNA)—The Arab League yesterday completed here its definitive return to its permanent headquarters in Cairo after Tunis played host to it for 11 years, the transferring of the documents of the League, and the payments of compensation for the employees who resigned from the League.

Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE contributed $12 million to the total allocated for compensating the employees who resigned from the League, and Kuwait donated a large sum for completing the League's second building in Tunis.

Three League organizations will remain in Tunis: the Union of Arab Radios; the Arab Interior Ministers Council; and the Arab Organization for Education, Culture, and Sciences. [passage omitted]

GCC Chairman Sends Letters On Gulf Situation

To USSR's Gorbachev

NC3012163890 Manama WAKH in English 1540 GMT 30 Dec 90

[Text] Doha, Dec 30 (WAKH)—The Amir of Qatar Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani, chairman of the current 11th session of the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] Supreme Council, has sent a letter to the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in reply to the message of friendship and support President Gorbachev had sent to the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC) summit which wound up in Doha on December 25.

In his letter H.H. the amir of Qatar praised the remarkable development in GCC-Soviet relations over the past years and expressed hope of the GCC members for further cooperation with the Soviet Union in various domains.

The letter which Foreign Minister Mubarak 'Ali al-Khatir delivered to the Soviet Ambassador in Doha Vladimir Vodyakhin today, expressed the appreciation of H.H. the amir and other GCC leaders for the courageous and just stand which President Gorbachev adopted towards the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

Such Soviet stand has greatly contributed to realizing worldwide unanimity to confront the invasion, maintain legitimacy and protect principles of the international law in compliance with the principles and objectives of the U.N. Charter, H.H. the amir said.

The amir of Qatar expressed the conviction that the clearcut statements the Soviet Union has issued against the Iraqi invasion and the many attempts the Soviet leader had made with the leaders of Iraq to convince them to comply with the Security Council resolutions and Moscow's despatching of envoys to the region for the purpose had proved the Soviet Union's commitment to safeguarding international legitimacy, maintaining security and integrity of small states and underlining coexistence according to the principles of good neighbourliness and resolving disputes through peaceful means.

The Soviet Union's vote for the Security Council Resolution 678 reflected Moscow's utmost determination to foil aggression and eliminate the logic of force, H.H. the amir noted.

Such a Soviet stand has also proved to the entire world that the Soviet Union is in favour of creating a new world enjoying detente, freedom and economic and social development, the letter said adding that the era of resorting to violence to realize expansionist political and regional objectives has come to an end.

The amir of Qatar also voiced appreciation of the GCC members of such a noble Soviet stand expressing their hopes for opening a new chapter in relations between the GCC members and the Soviet Union to be based on

understanding, common benefits and dialogue taking into consideration the historic friendship binding the two sides.

To President Bush

NC3012165090 Manama WAKH in English 1545 GMT 30 Dec 90

[Text] Doha, Dec 30 (WAKH)—H.H. the Amir of Qatar Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani, chairman of the current session of the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] has sent a letter to the American President George Bush in reply to a message of support received by the amir during the 11th GCC summit which was held in Doha last week.

In the letter which was conveyed today by the foreign minister, Mubarak 'Ali al-Khatir to the American charge d'affaires in Doha, Mr Donald Robert, the amir expressed in his name and on behalf of the GCC leaders deep appreciation of the U.S. strong position taken from the very first day of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and its aggression on Kuwait's sovereignty. That position was represented in realizing an international unanimity calling for an immediate end to the aggression, through the issuance of consecutive U.N. Security Council resolutions that were crowned with Resolution No. 678. That resolution set a deadline for Iraqi pullout from Kuwait, emphasizing the international community's determination to liberate Kuwait by peaceful means or by resorting to other options if peaceful means failed to realize that objective, the letter noted.

The amir praised this honourable position of the U.S., noting that this stance was a continuation of the policy adopted throughout the U.S. history which placed principles, values and the joint international interests above all other considerations.

The amir explained that relations between the U.S. and the GCC were passing through a historical phase, citing the courageous decision of President Bush and the American people to confront aggression, liberate Kuwait and restore the legitimate Kuwaiti authority.

The amir noted that the U.S. and the GCC were intent on realizing peace and stability. This joint objective has a basis in the commitment of the two sides to international laws and the U.N. Charter and in the conviction that the world could enjoy welfare and security where more attention could be given to development and problems could be solved through dialogue instead of confrontation. [sentence as received]

In his letter the amir also emphasized that the new international order should be based on rapprochement and cooperation not hegemony or repression. Shaykh Khalifah noted that the final communique of the 11th GCC summit underlined those principles which were also expressed in the Doha declaration. The declaration also defined the principles on which the GCC's regional and international relations are based, the amir said.

Omani Official Denies GCC Split Over Iraq

PM0112121490 Muscat 'UMAN in Arabic 25 Dec 90 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Al-'Alawai Says Solidarity With Jabir Is at its Highest Level"]

[Text] Doha, OMANI NEWS AGENCY—His Excellency Yusuf Bin-al-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, minister of state for foreign affairs, has said that the 11th summit currently convened in Doha has acquired a new characteristic in the extensive consultations among their majesties and highnesses, the leaders of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] states, on the issues on the conference agenda.

In a statement to the OMANI NEWS AGENCY, his excellency said that it has been clear throughout these consultations that the leaders are totally and fully agreed on everything concerning the Iraqi occupation of the State of Kuwait in all its political, military, and economic aspects.

He pointed out that their majesties' and highnesses' clear solidarity with their brother, His Highness Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, amir of Kuwait, is at its highest level, and that this shining solidarity is unprecedented with regard to other Arab issues.

His Excellency Yusuf Bin-al-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, minister of state for foreign affairs, described as untrue the rumors circulated by reporters covering the conference proceedings concerning alleged differences between the sultanate and Kuwait. He emphasized that the sultanate of Oman backs Kuwait fully in the spirit of the GCC, that the sultanate's principled position on the Iraqi occupation of the State of Kuwait is very clear, and that these rumors are lies and an attempt to fish in muddy waters in order to undermine the conference proceedings and this shining solidarity. These rumors serve only the hostile forces.

Kuwaiti Officials Arrive in Cairo for Symposium

NC0201222491 Cairo MENA in English 2203 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Cairo, Jan. 2 (MENA)—Kuwaiti Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs 'Abd-al-Rahman al-'Awadi arrived here tonight on a five-day visit.

He said on arrival that he would attend the international symposium to open on Saturday on the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in the light of the international law.

Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid will also attend the symposium along with a panel of Egyptian, Arab and international figures, al-'Awadi added.

He also voiced indignation at the Iraqi response to President Husni Mubarak's peace appeal to Saddam Husayn.

[In another Cairo-datelined item, Cairo MENA in English reports at 2205 GMT on 2 January that "Kuwaiti Minister of Public Health Dr. 'Abd-al-Wahab al-Fawzan arrived here tonight coming from Jeddah on a short visit to Egypt. Upon arrival, the Kuwaiti minister said he will hold talks with officials at the Health Ministry."]

Palestinian Affairs

Shevardnadze Offer To Meet Reportedly Declined

JN2112113590 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 21 Dec 90 pp 18, 13

[Report by Tawfiq 'Abid]

[Text] Amman—PLO Executive Committee member Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh has disclosed that the Palestinian leadership declined to accept former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze's invitation to meet with him during his visit last week to the Turkish capital. Answering a question by AL-DUSTUR, he said that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat informed him [Shevardnadze] that the best venue for holding any Palestinian-Soviet talks is any Arab capital or the Soviet capital, Moscow.

'Abd-Rabbuh expressed his hope that the meeting would be held with the Soviet leaders in the appropriate place, particularly since the D-Day for the war that Washington is preparing is getting closer and closer. He said that our joint role could help in preventing many pains in the region and world.

'Abd-Rabbuh arrived in Amman the day before yesterday on a visit of several days to Jordan. He will meet with several officials within the framework of coordination and consultation between Jordan and the PLO.

On the UN Security Council resolution issued yesterday criticizing Israeli practices against Palestinians in the occupied territory and calling for their protection, 'Abd-Rabbuh said that the PLO now expects urgent measures to be taken to hold an international conference to monitor the implementation of the Geneva Convention in the occupied territory, and to dispatch international observers who should have powers that go beyond receiving complaints. The observers must intervene to stop the Zionist practices and the repressive, terrorist measures practiced against our people.

'Abd-Rabbuh affirmed that this constitutes the first step for the presence of international forces in the occupied territory. The PLO will continue efforts to achieve this. He noted that the UN Security Council is called on to prove its ability to implement its resolutions, particularly with regard to protecting our people in the occupied Arab territory.

On the Security Council statement with regard to convening an international conference for peace in the Middle East, Yasir 'Abd- Rabbuh affirmed that the PLO adheres to its positions calling for the convening of this conference with the participation of all parties, including the PLO, the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. He called for holding urgent consultations among the concerned parties to prevent Washington from blocking this conference. He held the international community responsible for putting an end to the U.S. policy that obstructs the road to a comprehensive peaceful solution to the Palestine question to restore the Palestinian people's legitimate rights, particularly their right to repatriation, self-determination, and the establishment of their independent state on Palestinian soil with Jerusalem as its capital under the leadership of the PLO.

Official Claims Saddam Willing To Negotiate

LD0301130891 Berlin ADN in German 1059 GMT 3 Jan 91

[Excerpts] Tripoli/London/Bonn (ADN)—A peaceful settlement to the Gulf crisis is at the forefront of efforts being undertaken by Arab statesmen today. [passage omitted]

The PLO is among those striving to avoid the threat of war. In personal talks with the Iraqi head of state, the PLO representative in Bonn, 'Abdallah al-Franji, has gained the impression that Saddam Husayn wants to negotiate and is seeking a political solution to the conflict conjured up by the invasion of Kuwait. Al-Franji has called for an Arab peace conference on the model of the CSCE. [passage omitted]

'Arafat Discusses Palestinian-Gulf Linkage

JN0201104891 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 1 Jan 91

[Interview via satellite with PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat in Baghdad by Mahmud al-Sharif, AL-DUSTUR newspaper chief editor, in the studio; date not given—recorded]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Al-Sharif] Your Excellency speaks of the new world which is being born. This brings to mind some inter-related questions and I would like to leave them to you to answer in as much detail as you like. However the birth of the new world, what is going on in east Europe, the end of the superpower confrontation, the beginning of a period of cooperation, and the American talk about a new world—to what extent have these changes benefited or otherwise harmed the future of the political action in the Palestinian cause?

['Arafat] And the Jewish immigration, Mahmud.

[Al-Sharif] Yes, the immigration.

['Arafat] This is the Malta Agreement, Mahmud.

[Al-Sharif] I am coming to this, Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat]. I have this in mind. What is your excellency's view on the world changes in terms of the political aspect of the Palestinian problem? Are the Palestinians and Your Excellency still upholding the same principles you presented in Geneva in late 1988?

['Arafat] When we propose a peaceful solution we do not do this within tactics. Do they end the state of war between the East and the West, and agree on ending the cold war in Paris, only to ignite this war in the Middle East and the Gulf? Peace can either be for everyone or cannot be regarded as peace, unless they believe that the new order will be established at our expense. No, they must understand that this Arab nation will never accept establishing the new order at its expense. We say it should be peace in whose structure we take part; peace for all in whose structure we participate and which we make—peace that will not be at our expense or aimed at plundering our wealth and occupying our Arab territories.

This should be clear to the near and far. The peace that we have in mind includes peace in the Gulf, southern Lebanon, the Golan Heights, and the occupied Palestinian territory enabling us to establish our independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.

[Al-Sharif] His Excellency President Saddam Husayn has repeatedly proposed linkage between a solution for the Gulf crisis and solutions for other crises in the region. How do you view the issue of this linkage? For instance, if we take the Gulf problem and the Palestinian problem, leaving aside other problems that can be discussed on another occasion, how do you view this linkage between the Palestinian problem and the Gulf crisis?

['Arafat] I would like to say one thing. If they believe that they are coming here only to solve their economic problems, control the oil sources, and plunder Arab wealth, we say: No. We have territories that are occupied—Arab and Palestinian—and when he made this strategic linkage, this organized linkage between all the problems in the region, President Saddam was only responding to the children of the intifadah and the people of the intifadah. I would like to ask them: UN Security Council Resolution 242 stipulates withdrawal from the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories. Resolutions 605, 607, and all the UN Security Council and General Assembly resolutions say that the Israeli occupation of the Arab and Palestinian territories must be ended. How come they did not deploy their Armada [preceding word in English] to end the Israeli occupation?

Therefore, we think there should be linkage. Let them come forward. We might hold one conference, two conferences, or a conference ... [changes thought] I mean if there is desire for a comprehensive, genuine peace, then the methods to realize this can be agreed on.

[Al-Sharif] After strenuous efforts, the UN Security Council issued Resolution 681 for providing some monitoring—it does not say protection—of the Israeli massacres in the West Bank, Gaza, and the occupied territory. This resolution is supposed to encourage an appeal to the signatories of the Fourth Geneva Convention to look into the possibility of providing protection for the Palestinian people. What is Your Excellency's views of this resolution, its dimensions, its significance?

['Arafat] First of all this is only a step. It is not sufficient and is in our view incomplete. I would like to point out that this is not the draft resolution presented by the nonaligned group at the Security Council—Yemen, Cuba, Columbia, and Malaysia. This is just a minimum agreement, however, after 48 days of U.S. stalling and pressure which resulted in this lackluster resolution. God be praised, my brother. They had to wait for 48 days to issue this weak, lackluster resolution. But when resolutions are adopted against Iraq, the foreign ministers arrive, and within hours resolution after resolution are issued. [passage omitted]

'Arafat Talks With Bendjedid on Current Issues

LD3012142890 Algiers APS in English 1019 GMT 30 Dec 90

[Text] Algiers, 30 Dec (APS)—Following the audience granted to him by President Chadli Bendjedid Saturday, the president of the state of Palestine, Yasir 'Arafat told the press that the talks he had with the head of state essentially centered on "the difficult conjuncture of the Arab nation in general and the Palestinian cause in particular."

"The Palestinian people," 'Arafat said, "are presently facing up an increase of Zionist repression and threats against the Arab-Muslim holy places."

In this context, he dealt with the question of the extention of the Jewish immigration to Palestine these last days, terming it as dangerous not only for Palestine but for the whole Arab nation as its objective, he said, is the creation of the greater Israel.

Concerning the Gulf crisis, the head of the state of Palestine declared that he had informed President Chadli Bendjedid on the result of his recent tour in some African countries and which was aimed at having an African contribution in the peace efforts and the reduction of risks of war in the Arab Gulf. Concerning this point, 'Arafat said the ("concern) of African brothers is that what is happening in the Arab region influences Africa.

Finally 'Arafat hailed efforts made by Algeria, mainly President Chadli Bendjedid through the tour he made recently so as to find a peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis and the Palestinian question.

Saddam Sends Greetings to 'Arafat on Anniversary

LD2812183790 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 28 Dec 90

[Text] The brother president leader Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine, has received a message of congratulations from President Saddam Husayn of Iraq on the anniversary of the Palestinian revolution. The message said:

On the anniversary of the beginning of the Palestinian revolution we are pleased to send to you, to your colleagues in the Palestine Liberation Organization and to the militant Palestinian people, our best wishes and

sincere sentiments of brotherhood. On this dear occasion, we pray to God almighty to crown the just struggle of the Arab Palestinian people with success against the aggressive invaders.

We pray to God that flags of liberation and victory will fly on the soil of beloved Palestine and that al-Quds [Jerusalem] will become as it used be: the first of the two blessed Kiblahs and capital of the independent state of Palestine.

The holy jihad led these days by Arab and Muslim nations from all over the globe in defense of justice, rights, dignity, and noble Arab and Islamic values has placed all of us on the right path as decreed by God. It is the path of the patient and confident militants, those who believe in victory, and those who defend the land of Arab and Islamic sanctities against the obstinate satan who is desecrating parts of the land of the Arabs, spreading evil in it, and destroying its sources of enlightenment and right.

Dear brother: right, history, and the future are on our side. Let us be patient, persevere, and wage a holy war against the unbelievers and their agents wherever they may be. We will be victorious because victory will be decreed by God. Peace be upon you.

'Conspiracy' To Weaken PLO-Gulf Linkage Viewed

JN3012085990 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 30 Dec 90 pp 24, 19

[Report by Wafa' 'Amr]

[Text] A responsible Palestinian source yesterday disclosed that American-Israeli-Arab attempts are currently under way to weaken Iraq's political stand and foil the linkage between the Gulf crisis and the Palestine question.

The source warned of these sinister attempts, asserting that the PLO categorically rejects them, and that they will end up in failure and meet the same fate as earlier attempts to induce the PLO to recant its national stands.

The responsible official affirmed, moreover, that since the inception of the so-called Gulf crisis, the PLO has adopted a clear position in support of the Iraqi leadership and Iraq in its battle against the Zionist-U.S. invasion.

Throwing light on this conspiracy, 'Azmi al-Khawaja, secretary general of the Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party, said that confirmed information reveals an Arab-U.S.-Zionist conspiracy whose main aim is to make the PLO sever its alliance with Iraq, weaken Iraq's political stand, and foil the aspired outcome of the linkage between the Gulf crisis and the Palestine question.

Al-Khawaja added that a secret meeting was held in Paris last week between Israeli figures—including an adviser of Israeli Minister Ari'el Sharon and Shim'on Peres, leader of the Israeli Labor Party—together with Abba Eban, a Palestinian figure known for his friendship with Saudi multimillionaire 'Adnan al-Khashiqji, and representatives of Arab countries. He added that the discussions revolved around the scheme and ways to face all future contingencies.

He also said that contacts are currently under way among many parties which al-Khashiqji has undertaken, aimed at offering illusory incentives for the Palestinian side to create a crisis in the bastion of Palestinian national unity which supports Iraq in its pan-Arab battle, especially after the failure of the wager on the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue throughout the past period, in spite of many concessions which were offered to render it a success.

In the same context, another Palestinian official said that the United States has expressed its willingness to reestablish the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue in return for Palestinian concessions, including abandoning support for Iraq and dropping the linkage between the Palestine question and the Gulf crisis. The Palestinian official remarked, however, that the PLO will not yield to this U.S.-Zionist conspiracy.

To establish a "Palestinian state in the Gaza Strip," "recent events indicated that Israeli Minister Sharon has discussed with Shim'on Peres cooperation to establish an Israeli coalition government to implement this. [paragraph as published]

Khalaf Discusses Israel, Gulf Crisis, Jordan

JN2912161990 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 29 Dec 90 p 17

[Report by Teresa Haddad]

[Text] Salah Khalaf [Abu-Iyad], member of the Fatah Movement Central Committee, has denied that Israel has contacted the PLO. He stressed that the PLO rejects contacts in principle because any such contact would in reality obliterate what the PLO seeks to establish: the independent Palestinian state in accordance with international resolutions.

In a SAWT AL-SHA'B exclusive, Khalaf expressed astonishment that this would come from a Palestinian faction because talk about this issue, whether intentional or not, means taking part in spreading Israeli claims.

He added that Israel has talked about giving up the Gaza Strip because it is an area whose security Israel cannot control, does not represent a strategic threat to Israel, and may be the solution to establishing a Palestinian entity linked to Egypt and Israel in an experiment.

He noted that from the beginning Britain tried to obliterate the Palestinian identity to deprive these people from political and geographical representation on their own land.

He pointed out that Israel today pursues the same policy of denying Palestinian representation, so that the people cannot make their case nor have the leadership for

making the case. He declared that the Palestinian revolution has imposed its existence and representation, and that the United States and Israel can no longer deny the Palestinian existence and right to their land and establishing an independent state.

Abu-Iyad added that this is one of the most important accomplishments on the ground, and that Palestinians will not allow anyone to cast doubts about it, noting that the revolution has made big strides in terms of liberation. It has become an issue, not merely a problem of refugees.

He stressed that establishing a Palestinian state requires a long struggle. We should not forget that we are facing a U.S. octopus, and that influence on Europe is controlled by world Zionism. Therefore the struggle is long and extensive; yet it has become in its entirety an Arab-Israeli conflict, not an Israeli-Palestinian one.

He also pointed out that the revolution will continue and that the brave intifadah infuses it with nobility, regardless of the difficulties. Our people believe in continuity and stress that the intifadah in the occupied land must develop and continue to accomplish a higher Arab solidarity directed at the Zionist-Arab conflict.

Asked about the Gulf crisis and the prospects of the peaceful solution in the region, he said: I think that the chances for a peaceful solution are not over yet. There are still political solutions and settlements that could prevent the specter of war. The specter of war hangs over all interests in the Arab region, regardless of the instruments of war. He pointed out that war would take place on Arab land, which prompts each Arab to be sincere and reject the destruction of Iraq's military, economic, and social power.

He stated: I see absolutely no interest for any Arab party in striking Saudi Arabia, the Gulf, and Iraq because destruction will cover the entire region. He said that this is what the United States—along with Israel—seek, stressing the need for a peaceful Arab solution which the United States and Israel reject. Hence the need for a meeting between Iraq and the United States to reach a solution.

He added that in this light there are two [as published] important points. This meeting should take place. If it fails, I see nothing before me but war because the Arab solution will be one-sided when it ought to be everyone's will. We have long called for an Iraqi-Saudi meeting, yet regrettably our call has not succeeded because some superpowers disrupted and hindered it.

Through his tours and contacts, His Majesty King Husayn has tried, along with Presidents 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, Chadli Bendjedid, and Brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat]. Yet, all efforts have been met with an obstacle raised by the United States which rejects a solution.

He said that the next war will take place on Arab land, but its results will be felt in Europe, Japan, and other countries. Furthermore, the greatest effect will be felt in the United States.

He added that attention is now focused on the Iraqi-U.S. meeting because it is the key to beginning a political solution or the end to considering a political solution, since the United States will not allow any of its allies to hold a dialogue on the issue.

It would then resort to the other option—the war option—which we neither want nor wish for because war would be destructive, and Iraq would not be the only party involved.

Replying to a question on the 15 January deadline for Iraq to withdraw or face a U.S. strike on the region, he said that these threats are the beginning to making the use of military force possible. The United States, however, is aware that its war option will not be the same as in Panama or Grenada, and that war will end within hours. Otherwise, the United States would have used force on 5 August.

Thus dates do not scare us, yet we are concerned that threats will continue after February even without a solution. Intransigence will then increase in the region and it would be necessary to carry out a military operation resulting in devastation and destruction.

Therefore all sincere people in the Arab world, above all, and in Europe should join efforts to help initiate an Iraqi-U.S. dialogue and an Arab-Arab dialogue to resolve the crisis.

Asked to evaluate the democratic experiment in Jordan, he replied: Not enough time has passed to evaluate the Jordanian experiment. It is in essence, however, one of the most important steps by His Majesty King Husayn and his government because it is the only means to involve the citizen in political, economic, and social life.

With regard to Israeli statements about striking Jordan, Abu-Iyad said: If war erupts as a result of the Gulf crisis, it will not be confined to Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf. Israel will drag Jordan into the battle.

Hence, even prior to the Gulf crisis I saw that there is an Israeli plan to evacuate the largest number of Palestinians, deporting them from the West Bank and Gaza, and transferring them to Jordan in order to empty the West Bank and Gaza. This is the only way to crush the intifadah and to occupy parts of Jordan into which the Zionist entity can expand by establishing a security zone in Jordan similar to that in southern Lebanon, which would accommodate the Palestinian deportees and confine them to a security zone. Thus the Zionist entity would be acting in advance of any solution to the crisis, and thus the Palestinians would be outside Palestine.

I am confident, however, that this will not be easy because the Jordanian people will not be alone. We side with the Jordanian people, His Majesty King Husayn,

and his government in confronting any plan, especially since there is a drive to make Jordan the alternative homeland. He said: We will not accept any other state. There is no alternative to the Palestinian land for establishing our independent state.

Abu-Iyad added: We are ready to sacrifice our lives and do our utmost to confront an aggression on Jordan. We will not accept any solution outside Palestine. The battle this time will not be easy becuase Israel will have to face all Arab people. Jordan will not be alone because Egypt and Syria will not stand idle.

On the occasion of the 26th anniversary of the Palestinian revolution and the fourth anniversary of the intifadah, Abu-Iyad stressed: During the past years, since the Palestinian revolution was launched, we have not called the Arab and Palestinian youth to a picnic. We knew that our battle would continue. It is more important, however, that we not despair and think that our cause is surrounded by harsh enemies, and that there is an octopus, especially since Jewish immigration to occupied Palestine has recently escalated. Hence I say that we have to assume our responsibilitis and ask our people to be patient and continue the struggle. Let the enemy know that the Palestinian people will not despair because they have a strong will and are determined to win. We have no alternative.

U.S., UNSC Urged To Stop Israeli 'Crimes'

JN3012204090 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1930 GMT 30 Dec

["Text" of statement by "official PLO spokesman"]

[Text] The Israeli occupation forces have commited a new premididated crime in the occupied territory, taking the lives of six martyrs and wounding approximately 700 when they opened fire on crowds marking the anniversary of the launch of the Palestinian revolution massed at Rafah Camp in Gaza, Khan Yunus, Janin, and other parts of the occupied homeland, including attacks on worshippers in Gaza's grand mosque.

It has become clear that the Israeli occupation authorities are escalating their systematic state terror with the utmost butchery and violence as a fresh Zionist approach. The recent American position at the UN Security Council and the support Shamir received from President Bush to keep Israel in the military alliance assembled against Iraq has encouraged the enemy Israeli authorities to intensify aggression against the masses of our people by the Israeli army and armed Zionist gangs.

The PLO calls on the five permanent UN Security Council members, above all the U.S. Administration, to move to put a stop to these gruesome Israeli crimes, and urges the UN secretary general to move promptly to see to the implementation of the UN resolutions and the Security Council to protect the Palestinian people from this bloody, terrorist, Israeli escalation against our children, women, people, and sanctities, and to ensure the immediate implementation of Resolution 681.

'Barbarity' Against 'Peace Ship' Condemned

JN2912115990 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 2010 GMT 28 Dec 90

[Text] An official PLO spokesman has stated the following:

The PLO condemns the outrageous military action mounted by American, British, and Australian commando units against a peace ship carrying women and children from all the Arab countries and nations around the world. The ship was also carrying a cargo of medicines, milk, and foodstuffs to the militarily-blockaded children of Iraq and the Palestinian children domiciled in Kuwait.

This act of barbarity fills us with shock and outrage and prompts the bitter question: Have the Arabs descended so low as to acquiesce in a foreign military attack against Arab women and children in the Arabian Sea with tear gas bombs and rifle butts, and for them to be led to an unknown destination? Does this operation not offend what is left of Arab honor? Have the cries of women and children from the sea failed to move the Arabs?

The PLO views this operation as a fresh manifestation of the U.S.-led black alliance seeking to conquer and lay siege to Arab land and control Arab resources and future.

The PLO appeals to all free and decent Arabs and Muslims, the Nonaligned Movement, and the international community to speak out against this black operation and take tangible, practical steps—history will not spare anyone.

ALF Condemns Action

JN2812125090 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1145 GMT 28 Dec 90

[Text] Tunis, 28 Dec (INA)—The Arab Liberation Front [ALF] has said the U.S. and British barbaric sea piracy against the peace vessel Ibn Khaldoon is an ugly and terrorist act which the troops invading the Arab territories are accustomed to carrying out against anything related to peace.

In a statement issued here today, the ALF hailed the Arab and foreign women who courageously resisted the barbaric aggressive acts that the peace vessel Ibn Khaldoon was subjected to, as well as the Arab children who resisted with their small bodies the rifles of the barbaric invaders.

In its statement, the ALF said that the rifles of the Palestinian revolution, the stones of the Palestinian child, and all the Palestinian people will lie in wait for all U.S. and Atlantic interests in the Arab region.

PLF Condemns Action

JN2912181890 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1515 GMT 29 Dec 90

[Text] Baghdad, 29 Dec (INA)—The Palestine Liberation Front [PLF] has condemned the crime committed by the U.S. and British troops against the peace ship Ibn Khaldoon on Wednesday.

In a statement, the PLF said that "this dastardly crime, which was carried out by the U.S.-British invading troops against defenseless women and children in Arab waters, is clear evidence of full coordination between the U.S. Administration and the Zionist entity, which is perpetrating daily crimes against the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories." The statement added that the crime committed against the peace ship Ibn Khaldoon gives a picture of the ethical and human degradation and debasement reached by the evildoers who make insincere boasts about human rights.

The PLF statement went on to say that the terrorist and inhuman practices of the U.S. and British troops against the messengers of peace on board the Ibn Khaldoon provide firm evidence of the stupidity, savagery, and lack of the most basic code of ethics on the part of the invading troops.

The statement pointed out that the Arab nation is currently going through a fateful and crucial phase, facing U.S.-Zionist challenges and conspiracies that seek to impose humiliation and subservience on the masses and to strike at the Arab nation's renaissance in which all patriotic and sincere sons of the nation are taking part.

The PLF voiced support for Iraq and asserted that it would remain in the confrontation trench along with the Iraqi people until the liberation of land and man. The PLF statement said that these U.S. and Zionist practices will only bolster the Arab people's determination to forge ahead along the path of liberation and victory and not to kneel to the invading colonialists whoever they may be.

Concluding, the PLF asked the UN Security Council and other international bodies to confront the U.S and Zionist practices, to take firm measures against them, and to do justice to the people who demand the restoration of their legitimate rights to sovereignty and dignity.

Muhammad 'Abbas Reportedly Invited Back to Libya

JN0101111791 Amman AKHIR KHABAR in Arabic 31 Dec 90 p 8

[Text] Abu-al-'Abbas [Muhammad 'Abbas], secretary general of the Palestinian Liberation Front [PLF], has received an invitation to visit Libya.

Relations between the Front and Tripoli deteriorated following the expulsion of the front's military cadres from Libya, estimated at 150 men.

The new invitation comes in the wake of Tripoli's discovery that it can never do without strong arms and that the Western camp has no intention of seeking a rapprochement with Libya.

Abu-Sharif Discusses Intifadah Escalation, Gulf

JN3112100890 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 31 Dec 90 p 9

[Text] Amman—AL-DUSTUR, PETRA—Bassam Abu-Sharif, [Palestinian] president Yasir's 'Arafat's adviser, has urged the UN secretary general to provide protection for the Palestinian people from the oppression and terrorism of the Israeli occupation.

He said the Palestinian people's intifadah, which has begun its fourth year, has proved to the entire world, including the West, that the Palestinian people's determination to be free from the Israeli occupation cannot be defeated. He said the intifadah has proved to the world that Israel is occupying an Arab land by force and trying to crush a people through the use of arms and repression.

President 'Arafat's adviser declared that the Palestinian leadership's clear decision is to escalate resistance to the Israeli occupation regardless of the extent of Israeli violence and terrorism. He said: Shamir and his government should know that an escalation of systematic terrorism against Palestinians will only lead to an escalation of heroic resistance regardless of suffering.

He said the intifadah escalation actually began the day before yesterday when molotov cocktails were widely used against Israeli military buses and patrols. He affirmed, however, that the PLO has so far decided to avert the use of firearms so this would not be exploited by the Shamir government to employ further systematic terrorism against the Palestinians.

He added: We will escalate resistance in a manner that deprives the Israeli occupation soldiers the feeling of security in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

In a press conference in Amman yesterday morning, Abu-Sharif affirmed that the escalation of systematic terrorism against the Palestinian people, and the Israeli occupation forces' use of live ammunition against the Palestinians the day before yesterday against the defenseless Palestinian people, affirm that there is a deliberate and premeditated decision to kill the Palestinians as a move within an Israeli plan to prepare for a new war in the Middle East.

He affirmed that in accordance with this Israeli plan, Israel continues attempts to ui.Jermine the intifadah as an indispensable move within its preparation for participation in an upcoming war against the Arab nation.

He described Jordanian-Palestinian relations as excellent, saying: We are standing in the same trench against the Zionist danger posed to the Palestine question and Jordan. He asserted that the two sides hold identical

views toward the efforts to reach a political solution that averts catastrophe in the region.

He said His Majesty King Husayn and President Yasir 'Arafat affirmed this position on more than one occasion, saying the cohesion between the Jordanian and Palestinian peoples is the solid ground on which these historic, firm relations are built.

Abu-Sharif said the Israeli occupation forces escalated their barbaric attacks on the Palestinians in occupied Palestine in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as a continuation of the massacre that was committed on "black Saturday" when these forces used live ammunition to attack the Palestinians who were calling for freedom and the end of occupation.

Abu-Sharif expressed regret over the current bizarre dealing with UN resolutions. Noting that the United States and its allies employ double standards in dealing with the Middle east issues, he said: While we are witnessing multinational forces being mobilized to strike Iraq on the pretext of implementing UN Security Council resolutions, we see on the other side of the picture the United States covering up Israel's daily crimes and atrocities against the Palestinian people despite the 23-year-old Resolution 242 calling for Israel's withdrawal from the territories it occupied in 1967.

He added that the world is called on to define a fixed stand and clear yardstick for dealing with issues on the basis of the principles stipulated by the UN Charter.

He urged the masses of the Arab nation to specify a practical stand toward all states that use double standards in dealing with the region's issues as well as the states that extend material, political, and military support to Israel. He said the Arab masses in the labor, economy, and all sectors are called on to take practical measures toward boycotting all states that support and back Israel because we have become certain that unless the Arab masses adopt a practical stand toward these states through the practical expression of their desire for liberation, relieving the Palestinian people from occupation and boycotting whoever supports Israel, the stands of the Arab masses will remain political, moral, and with no real effect.

He expressed confidence that our Arab masses will continue practical support for the heroic Palestinian people who constitute the spearhead in resisting the Israeli occupation, which is organically linked to all new colonialist attempts to place our Arab homeland under occupation.

Bassam Abu-Sharif refuted reports disseminated by some international circles that Israel intends to accept peace. He said: There is nothing of the kind because Israel's official policy is the one that Shamir expresses: the policy of the annexation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and the policy of expansion and complete rejection of peace solutions that have been submitted, including the peace plan put forth by Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat at the UN General Assembly in Geneva in 1988.

Abu-Sharif said: I would like to reaffirm here that the PLO still abides by this initiative for the establishment of a comprehensive peace based on the implementation of the UN resolutions and on the basis of the establishment of two states, a Palestinian and an Israeli state on Palestinian soil.

He said it is evident that Israel intends to carry out expansion and annexation, particularly in light of its plans to bring in more than one million new Soviet Jewish immigrants to our occupied land and in light of its scheme to escalate state terrorism against the Palestinian people. Sharon has overtly declared that his plan consists of a Palestinian state on the East Bank of Jordan. The Palestinian command and people have categorically rejected this plan as the Palestinians will not accept any state other than their own state on the soil of Palestine.

On the Gulf crisis, Yasir 'Arafat's adviser said that the PLO will pursue its efforts to attain a peaceful solution that will secure stability and peace in the Middle East.

He added that the offer to hold negotiations to reach a political solution to the crisis made by Iraqi President Saddam Husayn gives the international community and the United States a chance to attain such a solution without resorting to war and killing thousands of U.S. and Arab soldiers.

Abu-Sharif said that any war the Americans may launch will create enmity between the Arab and American nations for the first time in history. He stressed that the Arabs do not wish this to happen, saying: We want understanding, cooperation, and friendship to prevail between these two nations, and this is possible if political talks are initiated.

He added that the PLO's efforts focus on one major issue, that of averting war in this region. He said he believes the U.S. Administration will be committing a great mistake if it continues to beat the war drums and dispatch more troops and warships to the region.

Abu-Sharif said that U.S. President George Bush will commit a grave mistake if he does not open the door to political talks between the two parties for the attainment of a peaceful solution to the crisis. He explained that the war will be a catastrophe and destructive for all parties and on all levels.

In reply to a question on current attempts to initiate dialogue between Saudi Arabia and Iraq, Abu-Sharif said that the PLO encourages any dialogue seeking to reach a peaceful settlement that will prevent the catastrophe.

Asked about the type and nature of the required peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis, Abu-Sharif said: I believe it will be the political solution that is based on the UN resolutions and the implementation of these resolutions

which deal with the Middle East, as this will be the acceptable solution to all parties concerned. He added that through such a solution the interests of all parties will be secured.

Abu-Sharif said he believes that an Arab solution based on the UN resolutions and with the assistance of the international community could lead to stability in the region and prevent war, a war whose destructive consequences on the region and the world no one can predict.

Replying to journalists' questions, Bassam Abu-Sharif said he has no knowledge that Israeli Labor Party leader Shim'on Peres met with several Palestinians from outside the PLO. He affirmed that the PLO is ready to enter into negotiations with the Israeli Government to implement UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, terminate the Israeli occupation, and attain a comprehensive settlement that will secure peace in the region.

On the PLO's stand on the proposal made through a third party to grant autonomy to the Gaza Strip, Abu-Sharif said: The PLO completely rejects autonomy and does not accept any solution that does not respond to the Palestinian people's aspiration of establishing their independent state with Jerusalem as its capital.

PFLP Opens Office in Baghdad 22 Dec

JN2212190490 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1820 GMT 22 Dec 90

[Text] Baghdad, 22 Dec (INA)—The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] opened an office in Baghdad today.

A ceremony was held to mark the occasion attended by the members of the Iraqi Revolution Command Council's Arab Liberation Movements' Office; Muhammad 'Abbas, also known as Abu-al-'Abbas, secretary general of the Palestinian Liberation Front; Hani al-Hasan, political adviser to Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat; 'Azzam al-Ahmad, ambassador of the state of Palestine in Baghdad; and ambassadors of friendly and fraternal countries accredited to Iraq.

Hamdi Matar, head of the PFLP's office in Iraq, said that the opening of the office is part of the fateful and militant cohesion existing between the Palestinian revolution factions and Iraq in its capacity as the staunch supporter of the Palestinian revolution and the defender of the Palestinian Arab people's rights.

Matar said that all the Palestinian revolutionary factions as well as the steadfast Palestinian people support Iraq and its great people under the leadership of President Saddam Husayn in their confrontation of the U.S.-Atlantic-Zionist invasion which threatens the Arab nation and its future.

Egypt

Abd-al-Majid Discusses Post-Crisis Scenario, Economy

JN2812200590 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 26 Dec 90 p 5

[Interview with Foreign Minister 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid by Angie Rushdie in Cairo—date not given]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] ['Abd-al-Majid] Regarding the second oldest issue, and that is the Palestinian intifadah, which this month enters its fourth year, it is possible to say that it was a natural reaction to a failure by the Israeli Government to grasp the situation. Simply speaking, the occupation authorities are seeking to force themselves on a population rejecting this hegemony—an undeniable political right to which it is entitled. Egypt has bent over backwards to impress the fact on the Israeli side. Egypt remains committed to investing further efforts on behalf of this cause and promoting a fair and comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict—something President Mubarak had attained by talking the United States and European nations into speaking to the PLO ahead of pursuing a final settlement. That process got off the ground in Tunis in 1989, but, sadly, was nipped in the bud by the eruption of the Gulf crisis on 2 August 1990. [passage omitted]

[Rushdie] The Gulf crisis has brought a number of issues to the fore, especially democracy and economic and political complementarity. In this regard, several initiatives are now being kicked around. You are on the record as saying that Gulf security must originate from the Arab region itself, free of foreign interference. What, in your estimation, is the ideal configuration in the post-Gulf crisis era?

['Abd-al-Majid] As I have already pointed out, the Gulf crisis has dealt a body blow to Arab balance and long-established Arab notions. It has also created a serious rift in the Arab world. This brings to mind a remark I once made: namely, that when the Gulf crisis blows over, the Arabs may have to take stock and debate the merits of an indigenous security system, since any foreign-inspired security system will be doomed. History abounds with precedents. Such a system would have to originate with the Arab nation and reflect its convictions and political will, for in the absence of political will, it will be pointless to talk about a collective Arab security system. Here, I would define an Arab security system as the attainment of peace in the Arab region. It should not be directed against certain Arab states in particular. We must bear in mind that for the realization of the ideal security system, regional problems—not least of which is the Arab-Israeli dispute—will have to be addressed resolutely and definitively. This is not to say that I am trying to link this issue with the Gulf crisis. [passage omitted]

[Rushdie] Development remains the primary moving force behind your diplomatic moves. How far have you gotten, taking into account the [Gulf] crisis and its future reprecussions?

['Abd-al-Majid] [passage omitted] Without a doubt, Egypt has come a long way in terms of economic development, and it has the economic infrastructure it needs to make still greater strides. The time is right for Egypt to catch up with economically advanced nations, with stability and security now well established. Egypt has come to react to global economic realities rationally and without adopting hollow slogans. We are aiming for the achievement of prosperity for the Egyptian individual, who, for his part, must, at this juncture, measure up to his responsibility and help the state ride out the present familiar problems led by population growth, which puts economic development at great risk and reduces the chances for the attainment of a higher standard of living. Nevertheless, it is hoped the relaxation occasioned by sisterly Arab states and the friendly U.S. Administration under President George Bush—waiving part of their debts—should contribute to an easing of the burden on the Egyptian economy, even if this does not mean the end of our economic ills. [passage omitted]

Reaction Noted to Ongoing Events in Somalia

Reconciliation Contacts Pursued

NC0101121591 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1152 GMT 1 Jan 91

[Text] Cairo, 1 Jan (MENA)—The Egyptian committee charged with attaining national reconciliation in Somalia has decided to make the necessary contacts with the concerned Somali parties in order to organize an unofficial meeting in Cairo during the coming weeks to discuss reconciliation in that country.

Dr. Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs, said this at a meeting of the committee in Cairo today. Dr. Ghali added that this measure is part of the Egyptian efforts to achieve peace in Somalia.

The situation is currently tense in Somalia in the wake of the Somali opposition's announcement that it seized a large part of Mogadishu yesterday.

'Self-Restraint' Urged

NC0201151891 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Dr. Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs, said today that Egypt is following developments in Somalia with concern. He added that, out of its concern for Somalia's independence, security, and territorial integrity, Egypt appeals to all parties concerned to exercise self-restraint to stop the bloodshed and provide an opportunity for making the necessary efforts to help restore stability to Somalia so as to enable this fraternal country to play its proper role in both the African and Arab arenas.

Meanwhile, Dr. Ghali stated that he is in continuous contact with our embassy in Mogadishu to assure himself about the condition of the Egyptian communmity in Somalia. He added that through these contacts he has

learned that all members of this community, including the Egyptian experts, in Somalia are well.

Mubarak Appeals for Cease-Fire

NC0201212591 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] President Muhammad Husni Mubarak today appealed to Somali President Siad Barre to do his best to work out a formula with the Somali parties to achieve an immediate cease-fire. President Mubarak said in his appeal that safeguarding Somalia's independence and stability should be the main consideration at this delicate stage through which the fraternal country is passing. President Mubarak added that he is confident that the parties concerned will take this step because it will save lives and property and restore stability in Somalia.

Shukri Critical of Mubarak's Position on Gulf

JN2912175090 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 25 Dec 90 p 1

[Report by Jamal Ambabi]

[Text] Labor Party leader Engineer Ibrahim Shukri has criticized President Mubarak's position on the Gulf crisis and his standing on the side of the unjust foreign forces in return for the partial write-off of Egypt's debts. In a political address to a mass rally organized by the Party's committee in al-Tall al-Kabir, Shukri said Muslim money is not for trade. He criticized the dispatch of Egyptian forces to the Gulf without consultation with state institutions.

Eng. Shukri stressed the failure of the successive National Democratic Party [NDP] governments in solving Egypt's accumulated problems. He called on President Mubarak and the NDP to leave the arena for other national forces now that the failure of the NDP has been established.

On the opposition parties' boycott of the latest People's Assembly elections, Shukri said the boycott was not an aim per se; it was the beginning of a new phase toward true democracy and reforms, he said, adding that the Labor Party has chosen the path of sacrifice and will not bend to any ruler.

On the Gulf crisis, Shukri condemned the unlimited U.S. support for the Zionist enemy and the continuing influx of Soviet Jewish immigrants to the occupied Arab territories. Israel, he said, will be the first beneficiary of war in the Gulf. As Muslims, he added, we will not support the unjust forces against fraternal Muslim people.

Shukri noted the failure of the Security Council to adopt a decisive stand toward Israel and its inhuman practices in the occupied territories. The world community is now practicing double standards, he concluded.

Minister Inaugurates Maritime Line With Syria

NC0301135791 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1330 GMT 3 Jan 91

[Text] Alexandria, 3 Jan (MENA)—Sulayman Mutawalli, minister of transport, communications, and maritime transport, inaugurated the new maritime line between Alexandria and Latakia at noon today. He announced that this line was established on the recommendation of the Egyptian-Syrian joint committee which met in Cairo in December.

The Egyptian National Maritime Company's ferry al-Jaza'ir has begun operations on the new line, ferrying goods and passengers between the two ports. It will make two trips a week, one from Alexandria every Thursday and the second from Latakia every Sunday.

Hungarian Foreign Ministry Official Arrives

LD0301095191 Budapest MTI in English 0740 GMT 3 Jan 91

[Excerpt] Cairo, January 3 (MTI)—Tamas Katona, political state secretary for foreign affairs, arrived in Cairo for a four-day official visit on Thursday.

Informing MTI, he stressed: This was the first time for an official of the new Hungarian Government to meet Egyptian leaders.

One of the goals of Katona's visit is to prepare Prime Minister Jozsef Antall's visit to Egypt, planned for the first half of 1991.

According to the schedule, on Thursday Katona will be received by Egyptian minister of foreign affairs 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid. In the evening, he is to meet Egyptian minister of state for foreign affairs, Butrus Ghali.

State Secretary Katona is to conduct talks on political and economic issues with minister of state for international cooperation, Maruice Makramallah. He will also read a lecture on the foreign policy of Hungary at the Institute of Diplomacy in Cairo. [passage omitted]

Al-Sharif Leads NDP Delegation to Libya

NC0101103591 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0956 GMT 1 Jan 91

[Excerpts] Cairo, 1 Jan (MENA)—An Egyptian delegation consisting of the National Democratic Party's [NDP] assistant secretaries general and members of the NDP's secretariat left Cairo for Libya today. They are Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif; Dr. Ahmad Salamah, minister of state for People's Assembly and Consultative Council affairs; and Kamal al-Shadhili, the NDP's organization secretary. The delegation also includes the chairmen of 10 NDP committees who will hold meetings with the leaders of people's committees in the Libyan Jamahiriyah with a view to bolstering ties between the two countries and paving the way for a major popular dialogue and further rapprochement.

Safwat al-Sharif stated that this visit comes as part of the joint popular action and follows the People's Assembly approval of the Egyptian-Libyan cooperation agreements. [passage omitted]

On another issue, al-Sharif said that President Husni Mubarak's appeal to the Iraqi leadership to listen to reason in its dealings with the international and Arab situation reveals President Mubarak's understanding of the dangerous situation and his concern for the Iraqi people.

Al-Sharif expressed hope that the Iraqi leadership will show understanding of this situation although he doubts if those in charge of Iraqi information appreciate the danger.

The minister of information emphasized that Egypt is very concerned with the Iraqi people's interests and future.

The delegation is expected to return to Cairo this evening.

Returns With Al-Qadhdhafi Message

NC0201163691 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1513 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Cairo, 2 Jan (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received a message from Libyan revolution leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi today. The message was delivered by Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif.

Al-Sharif said he also submitted a report to President Mubarak on the outcome of the recent talks in Tripoli between delegations of the National Democratic Party and the secretariat of the General People's Congress of the Libyan Jamahiriyah.

Iraq Rejects Plan To Compensate Guest Workers

PM0201164791 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 27 Dec 90 p 1

[Report by Mahmud 'Abd-al-'Azim: "Negotiations Fail Over Recovery of Money Due Egyptian Workers in Iraq"]

[Text] The International Labor Federation's negotiations with Iraqi officials over the payment of the amounts due to the Egyptian workers in Iraq have failed. Informed sources have emphasized that the Iraqi authorities rejected an Egyptian suggestion that the Egyptian Government pay the money due to the workers in Egyptian pounds and recover them from Iraq in dollars after the Gulf crisis is resolved.

The Iraqis proposed to the international organization's officials that the amounts due to the Egyptians be transferred in the form of material commodities like oil, with the aim of breaking the economic embargo imposed against Iraq. The International Labor Federation informed the Egyptian Government of its failure to reach a settlement of the Egyptian claims. The government is currently making contacts with the Gulf Cooperation Council states to pay the Egyptians returning from Iraq symbolic compensation from the development fund expected to be set up to help the Arab states affected.

Makramallah Cited on Debt, Economic Reforms

NC3112145290 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1300 GMT 31 Dec 90

[Text] Cairo, 31 Dec (MENA)—Dr. Maurice Makramallah, minister of state for international cooperation, has announced that the volume of Egypt's current debt burden amounts to approximately $14 billion, including interest due as of last July.

In a statement to MENA he asserted that the next few months will witness a significant relaxation in Egypt's debt burden because many foreign countries have expressed their readiness to settle these debts. He said the settlement will take various forms, including complete cancellation of the debts, extension of grace periods, and reduction of interest rates.

He pointed out that the current talks with the IMF are in the final stage, and a letter of intent is expected to be signed in January.

He added that he expects the new year will witness great strides in liberalizing the Egyptian economy and rectifying its course, especially as regards foreign trade, the amendment of monetary and currency exchange rate laws, and the reduction of the state's general budget.

Political Reform Seen as Way to Economic Progress

PM0201093991 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 23 Dec 90 p 7

[Article by Dr. 'Izzat Saqr: "The 1,000-Day Journey... Latest Slogan"]

[Text] Autocratic and totalitarian regimes always need to launch pompous slogans that change according to the political conditions experienced by their countries. And the masses of the Egyptian people have experienced a huge number of these slogans over the second half of this century. They started with "the time for revolutionary action has come" in the days of the officers' movement in 1952 and ended with the 1,000-day journey launched recently by the president of the republic.

The Egyptian people have also been accustomed over the recent period to the death of people's assemblies immediately after their birth. They have also been accustomed to the fact that every assembly has its own slogan. With every new assembly the president of the republic tends to launch a new political slogan. The previous slogan was "awakening," earlier it was "made in Egypt," but today it is the "1,000 days" for reforming the economy.

They are merely slogans that will neither nourish nor satisfy hunger. They are launched in speeches necessary for the Caesarean births of test-tube assemblies produced under the latest scientific techniques of political genetic engineering, so that they—the slogans, that is—provide linguistic material for the regime's writers to fill the pages of their government papers or radio and television programs for several months, until the regime

finds a new slogan or until new events emerge to preoccupy public opinion and divert the people's attention from hunger, from the prospect of sleeping in canvas shelters and graveyards, and from the debts which have reached over $1,000 for every newborn.

As for the 1,000-day slogan for salvaging the Egyptian economy, although it is similar to the previous ones, it reflects a glimmer of hope: At least the regime has admitted the deterioration of the economy which it has been running for a decade. So if the regime is sincere and really concerned about Egypt's welfare, let it pick up its walking stick and depart, or at least start the first day of the 1,000 days by granting the Egyptian people the right to rule themselves and reform their economy the way they deem suitable—which means political reform. Because economics is the outcome of politics, not vice versa.

If we want to reform the economy, then the first step is to achieve political reform, namely by amending the Constitution, especially with regard to the way the president of the republic is elected and his powers. These are the seat of the disease and the cause of the deterioration of the economy which they want to reform. The present Constitution is the seat of the disease. Correct it and the country's condition will be corrected. Or leave it as it is if you want to increase ruin and hunger.

Libya

Egyptian President Mubarak Arrives in Misratah

LD0301111491 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab Homeland in Arabic 1100 GMT 3 Jan 91

[Text] President Muhammad Husni Mubarak arrived in Misratah [east of Tripoli] just before noon. President Mubarak and the members of the delegation accompanying him were met there by the revolutionary brother leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, guardian of pan-Arabism.

Makes Statement on Gulf

NC0301122191 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1139 GMT 3 Jan 91

[Text] Misratah, 3 Jan (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has expressed his hope for a peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis, in order to spare the Iraqi people from the disaster a war would bring them. In a statement he made during a short respite with Colonel al-Qadhdhafi in a tent at the Libyan airport in Misratah, he said that he hopes with all his heart and with all honesty that Iraqi President Saddam Husayn would reconsider and reasess his stand and withdraw from Kuwait, in order to spare the world the devastation of a war.

President Mubarak said: I have called more than once for a peaceful solution and withdrawal from Kuwait. The specter is completely different from anything in the past and is dangerous, noting what al-Qadhdhafi has stated. He said: When we talk of the Gulf crisis, we deal with principles, ethics, and values—and not persons. Regrettably, however, every time we called for a reversal in the Iraqi position, the latest of which was my overture a few days ago, the Iraqi response was vituperative. This is extremely bad and regrettable, but does not bother me. We are talking of principles and values. Mubarak noted what the Iraqi president used to reiterate, that it was inadmissible for an Arab country to transgress against another. He said that even if the attack was to take place against Iraq, we would have defended Iraq. I see nothing wrong if Iraqi President Saddam backs down to spare the Iraqi people from bloodshed. Iraq's constant slanders shows its bankruptcy.

Asked if he is optimistic about a peaceful solution, Col. al-Qadhdhafi said: I think so, because we have always been surprised by unexpected decisions from Iraq.

Asked his views on the meeting of the leaders of the four countries—Egypt, Libya, Syria, and Sudan—Col. al-Qadhdhafi said that there are common interests among these countries and a connection related to the Gulf crisis. Hence, I thought we had better meet to exchange views on how to confront the latest developments in the European countries, from the standpoint that we called this year the year of Arab unity. We will also discuss a common concept and what may result in the next few days regarding the Gulf crisis. We seek to unify our efforts and stand in a way that would serve the Arab nation's future.

Morocco

Opposition Seeks Compensation for Riot Victims

LD3112140490 Rabat MAP in English 1300 GMT 31 Dec 90

[Text] Rabat, Dec. 31 (MAP)—Four Moroccan opposition parties represented at the parliament have tabled a proposal on a bill to compensate the victims of the incidents that took place in Morocco last December 14, 'AL-BAYANE' daily has said.

The proposal was tabled by the Istiqlal Party (nationalist), the Socialist Union for Popular Forces (USFP - socialist), the party for progress and socialism (PPS - procommunist) and the Organization for Democratic and Popular Action (OADP - left wing).

The PPS mouthpiece said that these parties want to 'commit the state to the compensation of the damages that resulted from social disturbance'.

The bill proposal it added, which has been based on Article 18 of the Constitution providing for solidarity in case of national disaster, argues that the latest events have undermined the property of citizens and bankruptcy to some of them.

The proposal contains four articles and sets the principle of the state's responsibility in compensating the victims

of the incidents. Insurance companies in Morocco do not compensate for damage suffered during social riots.

Union Delegates To Join Iraq-Bound Peace Ship

JN0201153191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1335 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Rabat, 2 Jan (INA)—A Moroccan Labor Union delegation left Rabat for Algiers today to represent Moroccan workers on the workers peace ship which will set sail from there tomorrow, Thursday, heading for Iraq.

The ship is carrying large amounts of medicine and food for children as an expression of the solidarity of the Arab Maghreb Union countries' popular workers with the sons of Iraq who have been besieged by the Zionist-Atlantic-American forces for over five months.

It is noteworthy that the decision to organize the peace ship was taken during the meeting of the Arab Maghreb trade union in Algiers at the beginning of last month.

Sudan

Al-Bashir on Gulf Crisis, Internal Talks

PM2812151390 London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic 17/24 Dec 90 (issues 401 and 402 combined) pp 16-19

[Interview with Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, chairman of the Sudanese National Salvation Revolution Command Council, by Hamidah Na'na' in Khartoum; date not given: "We Have Confidence in Arab Wisdom"]

[Excerpts] [Na'na'] Mr. Chairman, the Security Council yesterday issued a resolution allowing the use of force against Iraq. Then later a U.S. call was made for dialogue with Iraq. How do you view that, and do you believe that the U.S. call for dialogue can increase the chances of preserving peace and averting war?

[Al-Bashir] The Security Council resolution was expected. It is now clear that that council is a tool in the U.S. hand. We hope that the council will intensify its efforts to find a peaceful solution to the crisis.

That resolution conflicts with the aims for which the United Nations was set up, namely to maintain peace, not to call for and encourage war. We also hope, as I said, that the international organization will intensify its efforts to secure a peaceful solution that would eliminate the specter of war which, if it breaks out, will destroy a region to the world as a whole. It will also destroy the economies of the developing states. On that basis, we believe that the effects of that war would exceed those of the two world wars.

We wonder: Why are issues handled using two different scales and methods? Occupation is occupation, and there are occupied Arab territories whose inhabitants are being expelled and tortured daily with a view to changing their demographic identity and replacing them with foreign emigrants. [passage omitted]

As for the U.S. call to Iraq about dialogue, both we and the Arab states, including Iraq, which have their own position on the foreign forces' presence in the region, have always demanded that. The only possible way of reaching a peaceful solution lies through dialogue among the conflicting parties in order to secure a formula that guarantees every claimant's rights. But if they want to impose solutions through force, such a solution will never be a peaceful one. That is, if Iraq withdraws under pressure and threats of war, the solution will not be a peaceful one. Pressure will lead to a military action, regardless of where the first strike comes from. We hope that the United States is serious in its move toward a serious dialogue that would lead us to a peaceful solution.

[Na'na'] If a peaceful solution to the crisis is secured, how much time do you, as a military man, believe that the foreign forces would need for their withdrawal? Can the withdrawal, for example, be carried out over a period of time similar to the period over which these forces came to the region?

[Al-Bashir] If we go back some years and study why the rapid deployment forces were set up and what the objective behind their deployment was, we can say that their withdrawal from the region would take a long time.

These forces were created basically to secure the region in which they are present today. I am not saying this just for effect or on the basis of military analysis, but according to information. In 1988 I visited these forces while conducting maneuvers in California. I was at the time attending a training course in the United States. Before the maneuvers started they explained to us these forces' task. Their task is to secure the oil areas and the oil flow to the United States. And also to protect waterways in that region. So the objective of these forces and the purpose for which they were set up is to be present in that region. Why were these forces not deployed in that region before? This was the question which we put forward, and the officials' reply was: We cannot do that, because we anticipate sensitivity among the local inhabitants and the region's states. It was that sensitivity which prevented these forces from coming to and stationing in the Gulf region The process of moving the forces from their positions in the United States for deployment in the Gulf region is a costly operation. This is in addition to the training needed and the risks during the transportation process.

These forces' presence in the Gulf today is a solution to many of the problems they posed—administration problems, financing problems, and deployment problems if something happens in the region. All these problems have been resolved for the the United States. So the deployment of these forces in the region is an objective in itself. Thus I do not believe that their withdrawal in a short period of time is possible. It is bound to take some time. [passage omitted]

[Na'na'] In view of the Arab media's defamation campaign against the position adopted by you and other Arab states, do you believe that the wounds will heal easily, and what is the future of the Arab League, which is suffering real division?

[Al-Bashir] Through past experiences in the Arab world we have been accustomed to the fact that problems and differences tend to occur. But if there are good intentions and we eventually decide to meet to find a a solution to our problems within the Arab family, it is possible to overcome the past. In the end the wise men among the Arabs sit down and resolve them. And we have confidence in Arab wisdom. This is because we must remember the common enemy and the threat posed to the Arab nation's existence. We must realize that it is our enemies who benefit from these differences. And we pray to God that the Arab League will emerge from that dilemma stronger. [passage omitted]

[Na'na'] Your adoption of the principles of the Libyan experiment has brought you closer to the Jamahiriyah but has certainly caused a cooling in your relations with Egypt, which are supposed to be "eternal and immortal." What is the nature of relations between you and the Jamahiriyah on the one hand and between you and "big sister Egypt" on the other?

[Al-Bashir] In running our country's affairs we do not pay attention to others' views, because we know our problems and issues better than others. We do not interfere in others' affairs and do not accept other's interference in our affairs. When we Sudanese thought about how to secure our present and future we did not ask others to change their method of ruling or system for our sake. What we arrived at was the Sudanese people's choice. As for the similarity between the new system in Sudan and the political system applied in Libya, this will certainly lead to further rapprochement between us, as the people already speak a common language, and it is a great opportunity for us to develop relations between the two countries.

[Na'na'] Can we expect unity between the two countries soon?

[Al-Bashir] That is not so remote. Integration between us aims to be a step toward unity. And in the integration charter there is a stipulation about the need for a review in two years with a view to developing the charter. But if matters move faster, that charter can be revised to realize the strategic objective—unity. This is because we believe in Arab unity. [passage omitted]

[Na'na'] Lieutenant General, what about the problem of the South? Were you able at the dialogue conference held a month ago to lay down the necessary foundations for a suitable solution that would guarantee the country's unity and security?

[Al-Bashir] Each side expressed its opinion through the dialogue conducted at the conference. And through discussion the southern brothers voiced their comments about the past and the present. For example, the southerners' view of the past was that they had not had a fair share of power, that development had been confined to the northern areas and did not extend to the South, and that they were persecuted for their religion. This was in addition to other remarks. But I want to stress an important fact, namely that all those who came to the dialogue conference came with open hearts to find a peaceful solution to the problem of the South. Certainly the objective of those who participated in the conference was not to win power but, rather, to try to arrive at solutions guaranteeing peace among brothers.

As for John Garang, if his aim is different we will certainly not agree with him; he will not achieve what he wants unless he and his troops can reach the gates of Khartoum, and he will not be able to do that. The conference issued recommendations and resolutions. Among the most important resolutions which I would like to cite is the federation resolution, namely that Sudan should be ruled under a federal system. That is, not with the regard to the South and the North alone, but the other provinces as well. [passage omitted]

Information Minister on Rebels, Chad, POW's

JN3112150190 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1220 GMT 31 Dec 90

[Telephone interview with Muhammad Khawjali Salihin, Sudanese minister of culture and information, in Khartoum by an unidentified Amman radio reporter; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Reporter] Mr. Muhammad, there are recent reports about Nigerian mediation between the central government in Khartoum and the rebels led by John Garang to find new specific preparations. How true are these reports?

[Salihin] The truth is that President Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir visited Nigeria to improve relations with Africa, because neglecting our relations with Africa has had adverse effects in the past. The visit came within this context and was successful. The president was accorded a warm official and popular welcome. There is talk of mediation between the government and the rebels, but until this moment, nothing specific or notable has materialized. I think it is still premature. We only studied the Nigerian experiment in the federal system to benefit from it in proceeding toward federation in Sudan.

[Reporter] Before moving to other issues, it would be appreciated if you briefed us on the current situation in Southern Sudan.

[Salihin] The situation in Southern Sudan now is stable, and is under the control of the Sudanese Armed Forces. We always call for peace, negotiations, and dialogue, as the only means to reach a peaceful solution to this problem. As we are now on the threshold of a new year, we call on the brother rebels to respond to calls for peace,

dialogue, and negotiations to enable Sudan to build itself and stand on its feet to progress and prosper.

[Reporter] Your Excellency the minister, some Western reports speak of a specific Sudanese role in extending military facilities to the new regime in Chad. How true are these reports?

[Salihin] These reports are not true. Sudan has not extended any military facilities to the new regime in Chad. It has not and will not interfere in the internal affairs of any country—be it Chad or any other neighboring country. We think that what took place in Chad is a purely internal action. Sudan is not involved in it in any way.

[Reporter] The recent Khartoum statement, Your Excellency, indicates the Sudanese Government's specific interest in the issue of the Libyan POW's in Chad.

[Salihin] We denounce the U.S. action of forcibly transferring the Libyan POW's in Chad to the United States. We denounce and condemn this action, because it is a clear violation of Libya's sovereignty and pan-Arab security. This position arises from Sudan's solidarity with Libya. It has nothing to do with interfering in Chad or other countries.

[Reporter] Your Excellency the minister, reports call for optimism about beginning to carry out new plans for agricultural development in Sudan. What point have you reached in this context?

[Salihin] Sudan has set foot on the correct road for economic salvation. It has awakened the conscience of the Sudanese people to return to land and agriculture. Now, we have cultivated 1,319,000 feddans of wheat for the first time, whereas in the past Sudan cultivated 360,000 feddans. Last year we cultivated 669,000 feddans, while this year we cultivated 1,360,000 feddans [figures as heard]. God willing, next year we will reach self-sufficiency in this important strategic crop. We also expanded the cultivation of sugar cane. We reached self-sufficiency in sugar last year. This year, God willing, there will be a surplus for export.

[Reporter] God willing. Thanks to Muhammad Khawjali Salihin, minister of culture and information in fraternal Sudan.

Arab Revolutionary Forum Calls for Unity

EA0101195991 Khartoum SUNA in English 0921 GMT 31 Dec 90

[Text] Khartoum, 31 December (SUNA)—The Arab Revolutionary and Democratic Dialogue Forum, Sudan's branch, has called for setting the outset of 1991 the year for starting the achievement of the total Arab unity. The forum, in a statement it released yesterday, indicated that the year should witness the removal of the artificial borders and a peaceful pressure on the Arab governments to cancel entry visas and passports. The year 1991 should also experience greater freedom of movement, labour and mobility of capitals among the Arab countries, the statement said. The for in the statement [as received] called on the Arabs to amass their potentialities and array their ranks for effectively challenging the imperialist and Zionist threats against the Arab nation.

Kuwait

Heir Apparent Insists No Concessions

PM0201124691 Cairo AL-ANBA' in Arabic 30 Dec 90 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Shaykh Sa'd Says: World Will Not Allow Saddam To Defy Its Will, Resolutions, and Charters"—formerly Kuwait AL-ANBA']

[Excerpt] His Highness Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah, the heir apparent, has emphasized that Kuwait will not concede a single inch of its territory and will reject any initiative or solution inconsistent with the Arab summit resolutions and the UN Security Council resolutions. He expressed the hope that Iraq would respond to the Security Council resolutions to spare the region the dangers of war. He pointed out that the statements and attitudes emanating from Baghdad do not inspire optimism, nor do they give the impression that Baghdad's rulers will let reason prevail.

In statements to a number of Arab reporters his highness said that the international embargo imposed on Iraq has not been as successful as some expected, which is why the Security Council recently adopted Resolution 678 warning Iraq of something more than the embargo if it does not respond to the international community's will before 15 January and unconditionally withdraw from Kuwait.

Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah emphasized that the world will not allow Saddam to defy its will, resolutions, and charters, and pointed out that some of the Arabs who followed Saddam for a time changed their minds and demanded that he withdraw from Kuwait. We asked these states to declare their position openly, he said. He pointed out that developments in the near future will reveal further dimensions and repercussions of the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait.

The heir apparent described the Iraqi allegations about the foreign presence in the region and the linking of the Gulf crisis to the Arab-Israeli conflict as idle talk. He said that if it had not been for the Iraqi aggression, the foreign forces would not have come, and they will leave the region as soon as Saddam withdraws from Kuwait. Besides, the Iraqi aggression has done the most severe harm to the Palestinian cause, and has not served it. [passage omitted]

Agreement on Hungarian Fuel Stations To Be Signed

LD0201170191 London KUNA in Arabic 1326 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Al-Ta'if, 2 Jan (KUNA)—The Kuwaiti oil minister, Dr. Rashid al-'Amiri, will sign a contract next week with a Hungarian state company for the exploitation of a number of fuel stations in Hungary.

Dr. al-'Amiri stated to KUNA that the project, which will cost [word indistinct] and a half million dollars, was still in the preliminary stage. [Words indistinct] Kuwaiti oil project in Hungary. It falls within the famework of the policy of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation [Mu'assassat al-Betrul al-Kuwaytiyah—KPC], which he heads, to continue to expand its investments in the oil sector, particularly in friendly countries.

Dr. al-'Amiri said that the project provides for investment in 17 fuel stations in Hungary. It is the first investment project in East Europe following its recent adoption of the policy of openness. It also comes as an act of support for "Hungary's positive attitude toward the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, particularly as Hungary has suffered immesely by its loss of the Iraqi and Kuwaiti markets and the rise in the price of oil, in addition to the cessation of its oil supplies from the USSR."

Dr. al-'Amiri pointed out that investment in East Europe is a step in the right direction following the political changes there, as East Europe is expected to witness a continuous economic growth.

Dr. al-'Amiri said that the KPC is studying a number of oil projects in Thailand and East Asian countries. He said he hopes the feasibility studies for these projects will be completed shortly.

Dr. al-'Amiri said that Kuwait has so far lost about 5 billion dollars as a result of the stoppage of its production since the treacherous Iraqi invasion on 2 August, in addition to the huge losses suffered by the oil sector as a result of looting, theft, and sabotage, and which cannot be estimated now.

Speaking of Iraq's oil production, Dr. al-'Amiri said that it is confined to military and consumer purposes. However, he did not exclude the possibility of Iraqi oil being exported to Jordan.

He said that Kuwait was recently forced to buy crude oil and oil products from Saudi Arabia and from the spot markets according to the prevalent prices, in order to supply its networs of stations and refineries in Europe to ensure their continued ability to offer their services and to meet their contractual commitments.

Al-'Amiri ruled out that the possibility of a sharp increase in case war breaks out in the region. This is because of the strategic and commerical stockpiles in the Western countries which could be offered in the markets to compensate for the shortage.

He pointed out that the oil prices have fluctuated since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait—though they have settled recently with a slight increase—based on the statements of the officials on the promiximity of the end of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait or the likelihood of war breaking out in the region.

Al-'Amiri added that OPEC can play a major role in stabilizing oil prices if some OPEC member countries can increase their production to compensate for the shortage resulting from the stoppage of production from

Kuwait and Iraq. These countries include Saudi Arabia, the UAE [United Arab Emirates], Iran, Venezuela, and others.

Qatar

Amir Receives Message From Iranian President

NC0201133991 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1230 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Doha, 2 Jan (WAKH)—Qatari Amir His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani has received a verbal message from Iranian President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani. Mustafa Khomeyni Ha'iri-Fumani, director general [of Persian Gulf Affairs] of the Iranian Foreign Ministry, gave the message to the amir during a meeting here today. His Highness Shaykh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, Qatari heir apparent and defense minister, and Iranian Ambassador Nasrollah Mirza'i attended the meeting.

The QATARI NEWS AGENCY has reported that the message deals with the situation in the Gulf, developments in the crisis, Iran's firm stand toward them, and the good bilateral relations between the two countries.

Qatari Foreign Minister Mubarak 'Ali al-Khatir has received a written message from Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati concerning bilateral relations between the two countries, ways of consolidating them, and the latest developments in the Gulf. Ha'iri-Fumani handed the message to the Qatari minister during a meeting with him today.

Canadian Defense Official Comments on Visit

NC0201154791 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1315 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Doha, 2 Jan (MENA)—Mary Collins, Canadian associate minister of national defense, has stated that her talks with His Highness Shaykh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, Qatari heir apparent and defense minister, dealt with bilateral military cooperation and the current situation in the region.

Collins said that her visit to Qatar was also made to inspect the Canadian forces stationed there, to review their preparedness to confront all possible contingencies, and to extend the necessary support to them.

In a statement to QNA prior to her departure from Doha today, the Canadian minister called for intensifying efforts to secure a peaceful Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait in order to spare the region the effects of a very destructive war. She said that her country encourages all attempts to attain a peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis. She said, however, that the situation is extremely difficult and no one can tell what will happen.

Regarding a possible Iraqi preemptive strike against the multinational forces before 15 January, Collins said that anything is possible and no contigency can be ruled out; for this reason, one must be prepared to face all possibilities.

The Canadian minister affirmed that Iraq does not possess nuclear weapons but warned that the use of chemical or biological weapons will inflict great damage.

Saudi Arabia

King Receives Iraqi Town's Message of Support

LD0201200991 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Excerpt] King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, may God protect him, received a telegram from Ibrahim Na'im la-Samawi, on behalf of the people of the Iraqi town of Samawah. The following is the text of the telegram:

I am sending this telegram with which I have been entrusted by the honorable Iraqi people in general, and the people of Samawah in particular, to say that together with the honorable Arab and Islamic people we condemn the Iraqi media broadcasts of lies, deceit, nonsense, ingratitude, and lack of recognition for the honorable attitudes which the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has taken ever since its foundation by the late imam, your father King 'Abd-'al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud. To this day it favors the Iraqi people in particular and the Arab and Islamic peoples as a whole. This is well known to both friends and foes and is only denied by tyrants and (?hangmen) such as Iraq's and those who have gone astray, following suit. We promise to God and to you that we are loyal soldiers under your wise leadership. We ask God to protect and preserve you as a leader and imam of the Islamic nation. [passage omitted]

Czechoslovak Delegation Arrives for Economic Talks

LD0201232591 Prague Federal 1 Television Network in Czech 2100 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Excerpts] A Czechoslovak delegation headed by Foreign Minister Jiri Dienstbier arrived in Saudi Arabia today. [passage omitted]

With regard to economic prospects, today's talks by Minister Dienstbier, Presidential Economic Adviser Wagner, and their entourage confirmed possibilities which are not negligible. Although Saudi Arabia is fully occupied with the conflict in the Gulf and its solution is a condition for all future Saudi steps, this country is prepared to supply oil to Czechoslovakia and its government is prepared to guarantee private banks' credit for Czechoslovakia. Saudi Arabia does not itend to put any obstacles in the way of trade between private Saudi firms with Czechoslovakia, on the contrary, if there are to be any obstacles it wants to deal with them on the basis of agreement. It is possible that an information channel will be set up through which the Saudi ministries would be obtaining offers for employment of Czechoslovak

experts, in particular graduate engineers, doctors, and oil technicians in Saudi Arabia.

Czechoslovakia is also prepared to assess Saudi interest in the purchase of some military technology which is not of offensive character.

Jiri Dienstbier also handed over in Riyadh the message from the President Vaclav Havel to King Fahd, the head of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in which the new Czechoslovak policy to Islam countries is outlined, and the Czechoslovak interest to expand its relations with the countries of Arab Peninsula is expressed. The economic part of the delegation will complete its talks here in Riyadh tomorrow and on Friday Minister Dienstbier's visit to Czechoslovak anti-chemical unit near the town of Prince Khalid is expected. Because King Fahd is in the same area at an inspection tour, it is possible that the two politicians will meet.

Talks Begin in Riyadh

LD0201152691 Prague Domestic Service in Czech 1500 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Czechoslovak Minister of Foreign Affairs Jiri Dienstbier, who started his visit to Saudi Arabia today, met with his Saudi Arabian counterpart Sa'ud al-Faysal in Riyadh today. He discussed with him the situation in the Persian Gulf and international efforts aimed at Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait. It is assumed that on the agenda of the two ministers' talks was also the issue of establishing diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Czechoslovakia.

Relations Deal Not Signed

LD0201193491 Prague Domestic Service in Slovak 1730 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Federal Deputy Premier Jiri Dienstbier has today become the first Czechoslovak foreign minister to visit Saudi Arabia, where he was expected to sign an agreement on establishing diplomatic relations between the two countries. This did not happen, and our special Czechoslovak Radio correspondent Michal Michalcik explains why:

[Michalcik] Riyadh explained its position by saying that no budget for this matter had been approved. This did not mean, however, that a protocol on establishing diplomatic contacts could not be signed in the next month or two, [foreign] Minister Sa'ud al-Faysal said. This month our side will be sending a liaison officer to Riyadh. He will enjoy diplomatic immunity, be given diplomatic rank, and his main role will be to act as a mediator in contacts between our two countries, and to issue visas for our citizens. This means that henceforth we will be conducting our dialogue, not via Washington, but directly.

As far as visas are concerned, the Saudi side is willing to accept the services of qualified Czechoslovak experts, in particular doctors, engineers, geologists, and oil industry experts; it was precisely this latter area and, to be specific, deliveries of Saudi oil to Czechoslovakia, that were the subject of intensive talks today between the president's adviser, Richard Wagner, and his team. For the time being the results of their efforts are not known, but this does not alter the fact that Czechoslovak-Saudi relations were given a new quality today with many interesting suggestions. But the main thing, I think, is that there is clearly interest on both sides.

Tomorrow Minister Dienstbier continues his visit to Saudi Arabia.

Greek Defense Minister Arrives on Four-Day Visit

LD0201192491 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Excerpt] Greek Defense Minister Ioannis Varvitsiotis today arrived in Jeddah on a four-day visit to the Kingdom. [passage omitted]

Saddam Delivers Message on Christmas, New Year

NC3012140090 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1600 GMT 31 Dec 90

[Message by President Saddam Husayn; place, date not given—recorded]

[Text] Baghdad, 31 Dec (INA)—In the name of God, the merciful and compassionate. O believers everywhere, may peace be upon you. At this time of year, Christians look at themselves with hope. They take an inspired spiritual look at their lives to assess and criticize, to decide what type of conduct and way of thinking they wish to consolidate, and to abandon what should be abandoned.

In this atmosphere, which is fragrant with the aroma of Christmas and filled with joy and spiritual meaning, the world—not just the Christian sons of our Arab nation or of Iraq alone, but all people of our nation, regardless of their religion—takes part in all this as a kind of humanitarian and spiritual expression. Everybody participates out of belief, because Jesus Christ, may peace be upon him, is the prophet of God and because he is an Arab. Through Christ, as well as through all prophets and messengers, the Almighty wanted to express the meaning of respect and the responsibility which He entrusted to our nation, the intermediate [wasat] nation. He sent Prophet Muhammad, God's prayers and peace be upon him, as a witness to this nation and He made this nation a witness to all nations on earth.

In this, the sons of our nation express their understanding of the essence of religions, the role of the prophets, and the message of their one nation.

As we celebrate the birth of the prophet Jesus the son of Mary, may peace be upon him, and the birth of a New Year, the world and all nations review the history of earlier events. They pause at certain stages out of their general sense of humanitarian responsibility to observe what the Almighty wanted to convey through Jesus the son of Mary, may peace be upon him, and later through Muhammad, may God's prayers and peace be on him.

Ladies and gentlemen, in today's world people's lives are dominated by false happiness. They try to fill the void by seeking true happiness. A false world is dominating what is genuine and true, a world in which many people die because of shortages of food and medicine and the basic necessities of life. This comes at a time when large quantities of grain are being dumped in the seas and oceans to maintain their prices and guarantee their profits and at a time when billions of dollars are being wasted on weapons or on the trivialities of life. This is a world in which many people are attracted by glittering form over solid substance.

Ladies and gentlemen, many people in our world today feel that they have no useful role or work. They feel this regardless of whether they find themselves in scientifically and economically advanced societies or in backward ones. Who is without work is without a role and a mission and thus loses an important aspect of his humanity and effectiveness. If we add the loss of work to the loss of faith, man loses his essence. This is because the basis of the essence of mankind is useful work that serves humanity, based on strong faith. We find that the happiness which is enjoyed by some is still lacking among many other people.

Many of those who have enjoyed happiness have not enjoyed it as genuinely as God wanted and as Christ wanted in his teachings, because it came at the expense of other people. This is not genuine happiness that gladdens the heart, happiness which has been cleansed of the evils of life and of Satan's temptations.

Security and peace are still missing from the lives of many people, foremost among whom are our kinfolk and brothers the Arabs of Palestine and the occupied Golan and the people of Lebanon. To this we should add the new occupation of the land of the Muslim holy places in Najd and Hejaz [Saudi Arabia] by the oppressors' armies.

The great people of Iraq are threatened daily by a new kind of aggression, which is the latest produced by the nests of wasps of evil in the West, which is full of such evil and aggression in many places. Nevertheless, it also contains other parts that are full of good people who love to do good and who are thus enriched by moral excellence. They are still striving and struggling for peace.

The basis of our struggle is for the nation—which was honored by God's prophets, and which the prophets were honored by carrying all the heavenly messages to humanity, as preachers and strugglers, so that the voice of faith and virtue could be raised—I say that the basis of our endeavor and struggle in this country, in which virtue is dominant in the souls of the vast majority of its people, while the others strive to achieve it—is for the nation to start carrying its message again. This is a truly humanitarian role that rejects injustice and calls for virtue, after faith had been strengthened in hearts, minds, and consciences. Such a role can be played only by free men. For the nation's sons to be free, they must reject injustice. They must reject the repressive will of those who gave themselves a repressive role, permitting or banning this or that matter, according to double standards and from a perspective based on narrow interests that seek false happiness and selfish and persecutory interests for some people at the expense of others, at the expense of human values in general, and contrary to what God Almighty wanted, what the prophets preached, and the messengers worked for.

Thus, good and evil enter into their eternal struggle. The land of the Arabs, the cradle of prophets and the land of the messages, becomes their venue and the general framework for their related subjects. Like the prophets from the land of the Arabs, including Christ, who were

human beings sent to all humanity as God wanted them to be in His heavenly messages, we aspire in this struggle toward peace, amity, victory over evil, the rejection of encroaching upon the livelihood of the poor through the wealth of the rich, and freedom from the bastion of the oppressors. We aspire toward this so that everyone can enjoy it, because we want it and wish it for everone, whether those who did injustice to themselves and to others or those to whom injustice was done in an aggression against them and all humanity. We want freedom for all nations and peoples, for the white, yellow, and black among mankind. This cannot be attained unless the people of our nation become their own masters.

In this major conflict, like other major conflicts, the evildoers stand on one side led by Satan and the good people stand on another side governed by lofty values dictated by God Almighty. In this confrontation, these good people are guided by patience, fortitude, ethics, and justice. These are the faithful symbols. In our nation's and mankind's history, there are no people more faithful, more ethical, fairer, and more patient and suffering than God's messengers, prophets, and those who lead pious lives, believing in God and guided by the great principles in life—struggle, preaching, and spreading goodness.

In this confrontation, there are people who, having been tempted by Satan, betrayed the principles of Christ as well as the principles and values of Islam. They support one another and some of them lead their servants. May they all be damned by God. Christ's teachings have nothing to do with them; neither do the principles of noble Islam. As Judas betrayed the trust and Jesus Christ, Bush betrayed Christ's teachings in his aggressiveness and persistance in his evil propensity. As the apostates and hypocrites betrayed Islamic principles and Prophet Muhammad's teachings at the start of the Islamic religion, so did the custodian of the two holy mosques [Saudi Arabian King Fahd] when he betrayed the trust, Islamic principles, and the values of Arabism. Thus, the epithet traitor of the two holy mosques befits him. Abu Rughal [an ancient Arab traitor], who showed the army of Abraha [ancient Abyssinian commander] the road to Mecca, was just as evil, harmful, and disgraceful in terms of what God wants for the great nation.

May God grace everyone with good health, happiness, and hope; and may God deepen everyone's faith in what satisfies Him. May God grant them the aspirations for good, love, and peace. May God's peace and blessings be upon you.

Saddam Discusses Condition of Conscripts

JN0201172891 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1505 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Speech by President Saddam Husayn at a joint meeting of the Revolution Command Council (RCC), Regional Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, and Council of Ministers and "through them, to the Iraqi people" in Baghdad on 2 January—recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate; O comrades and attendees; May God's peace be upon you. Happy new year, and may God return the years on our dear people, on our noble nation, and on you with a realization of the noble and legitimate dreams, God willing. O brothers: Under specific circumstances and conditions, the three dimensions of time—the present, the past, and the future—converge. It is an instant constituting a turning point in the lives of nations and peoples. After this instant passes, each of these dimensions returns to where it belongs. Then the march of the nation and the people takes its course, and the consequences of this course will not emerge until some future time. A relative pause takes place when mankind on the level of other peoples and nations takes broader, quicker, and firmer steps. As for regression, it takes place when the step fails to be firm, and when it slides into a new position determined by the conditions and circumstances of the new deterioration.

As for the ascension which responds to the ambitions of the nation and peoples under these circumstances—ascension to our nation, whose collective cultural character was decisively matured by the spiritual factor, faith in God, His books, His messengers, and the hereafter—at this phase, there will be no ascension in accordance with the usual concepts perceived by the general public regarding the components and requirements of a happy life exclusively based on the provision of the rightfully owned means of livelihood in daily life. This ascension should not be confined to the provision of palpable requirements. This ascension goes beyond this to include a level that is higher than the wishes of the phase, and to a level of expectation that is also higher. This is the inevitable product of the interaction of tangible elements with intangible and sublime things.

This is a new and different life. It is not merely a relative development in the course of life that is better than previous phases. It reflects a role and a standing that goes beyond the national and pan-Arab frameworks to embrace the more general universal framework. This role goes beyond a single time dimension, the present, to include the three dimensions of time—be it the present or the future. The present and the future are built on the values and considerations cherished in bright chapters, and also on everything that is glorious in the activities and positions of the past. That is true when these values and considerations are evoked to lend the present a depth, a hope, an influx of faith, and a revolutionary spirit in terms of giving, sacrifice, and altruism.

Our stage is described like this, and if we do not underscore this description, the sound description will be imbalanced. The enemies of our nation and the enemies of the messages and values which we mentioned in this description should have comprehended this. On

the basis of this comprehension, they are massing their forces against the shining center of faith, represented today by great Baghdad.

The task at hand is for all those who are among the gathering of the faithful to comprehend these terms and concepts, and turn their presence into an effective one, not by raising slogans and sayings, but in every minute of work, giving, and continuous readiness. And every moment along the way must become a new kind of giving that exceeds the effects of creativeness and the readiness to make sacrifices within the traditional framework, even if this framework falls within the context which has recorded all known development in our life before 2 August. All should build and fight in defense of the buildup. No spirit should emerge to say that there are people working in place of a larger number whom they represent, or that there are people eating from the production of others' work without inviting those who represent them to eat with them.

There are people who fight, wage a holy war, and struggle to represent a large number. But all are in the same trench in terms of readiness and practical work—whether in building and maintaining this building through creativity, which never stops striving to be in harmony with its stage, not even for one moment—or in bearing arms and being in a state of readiness, and never hesitating for one moment to make sacrifices to achieve redemption. The builders should think of the circumstances of the fighters and their sacrifice; while the fighters, all fighters, should always remember the efforts of the builders in the other fields of the state.

With this spirit, we triumphed in our previous battles. On this basis, we are waging the battle of the present stage, the crucial battle. Almighty God wants the valiant Iraqis to stand at the forward positions to have the honor and high status among the ranks of the believers and with Almighty God, God willing.

Brothers, I have given this entire introduction to address part of an issue. Yet, at the same time, it constitutes an essential human principle for the relationship between the frontline and its men on one hand, and the line of its great depth, the people, on the other.

Because dealing with any branch of an issue cannot be achieved correctly without thinking of the comprehensive, overall picture, it must be said that many of the fighters on the front now are conscripts and reservists.

Prior to being called up for the service, many of them did not have a job with the state in order to support their families. He provides the basic human needs for himself under such circumstances.

Because the fighter is now stationed in the southernmost point of Iraq, those who take leave must pay their own transportation costs—sometimes very high—which their income cannot cover.

A large number of them have faced serious difficulties, especially those from low-income families—in particular, those who served for a long time in the al-Qadisiyah [reference to Iran-Iraq war]—and have now been called up once again after 2 August last year.

Many of the fighters in the reserve forces are from an age group that has served for a long time—some of them are the breadwinners of families. They are putting up with difficult circumstances in accordance with this scenario. Even some volunteers in the Armed Forces are experiencing the effects of one aspect of the scenario we have just presented to you regarding their living conditions and transportation.

Since I have been aware of this for some time, I consulted with some of the experts on how to deal with this matter. Since I did not get encouragement from the experts and economists due to the situation we are in, this issue has been postponed up until now.

However, the time has come, and the measures to be taken should not be delayed any longer, so that this situation may be addressed.

Through these words, I must also declare to you dear brothers that the fighters at the front who are preparing to destroy the arrogance of infidels, deviants, and hypocrites will not be dissuaded from this role by the minor difficulties of daily life. They realize that these difficulties are temporary, and that once the emergency situation is over, the bright sun we have been waiting for will arise. Then, abundant goodness will shine for all the people, God willing. The fighters' share of this goodness will definitely be in proportion to their sacrifices and patience.

However, I am the one who could not bear this any longer. I called for dealing with it as soon as possible, not only in response to the standards of practical life, but more importantly, to implement the arrangements of the master of the universe, and our Prophet Muhammad, God's servant, God's peace and blessings be upon him, in times of war and in our social life, him and his companions after him.

For us to be correctly inspired by the spirit of the message, we must, along with these measures, make those who are benefiting from these extraordinary circumstances participate in a new way financially and in all economic activities without exception under this close-to-war phase we are going through. This is because the homeland has provided them with all the benefits they enjoy, including economic and financial ones. It is part of their duty to their homeland to do their part for the circumstances to which the homeland, the citizen, and the higher values are being subjected during such a big trial—much more than they have ever done.

Then, the essence of what we talked about in the introduction, in terms of the relationship and understanding between the builders and those responsible for maintaining the building on the one hand, and the fighters in

the battlefront on the other, will be accomplished. Then also, the slogan that the homeland is for everyone, that we are all part of our community, and that all people have duties to protect the homeland and safeguard the one society—this slogan will be realized in order to attain these great aims, after which your state, dear brothers, will not only become one of the richest centers of wealth among the world countries in the eyes of God and history, but the richest in terms of the relative measurement of wealth according to the expanse of the homeland and the population number. There will not remain any needy, or anyone whose need is legitimate. In fact, goodness will transcend Iraq to reach those who deserve it according to the yardstick of principles and the Iraqis' nature, and according to the call blessed and approved by God. Then, you will have attained the legitimate bounties of the earth and won the esteem of God, for which you will be envied, and history will record for you all that is aspired for by zealous and chaste men. God is great. May God's peace be upon you. [applause]

Saddam Addresses Soviet Parliamentarians

JN0201222191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2145 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Baghdad, 2 Jan (INA)—President Saddam Husayn received this evening the Soviet parliamentary delegation led by Rizoali Odzhiyev, member of the Supreme Soviet Presidium and deputy chairman of the soldiers-internationalists committee. The delegation comprises Ruslan Aushev and Aleksandr Kolodeznikov, members of the Supreme Soviet Presidium, and the soldiers-internationalists committee.

President Saddam Husayn explained to the Soviet parliamentary delegation Iraq's principled and firm position on the return of Kuwait to its origin, the historical background of this, and the treasonous role of the al-Sabah family in the conspiracy against Iraq to destroy its economy, weaken it, and affect its principled position on the Palestine question.

The president affirmed that Iraq respects international legitimacy and that Arabs need—more than the Americans—international legitimacy.

The president asked: But where is the international legitimacy the Americans talk about while Palestine has been occupied since 1948, or when Jerusalem was annexed to Israel, or while the Golan and southern Lebanon are still occupied by Israel?

The president said: We want peace, and we respect international legitimacy. However, others should also respect it. And the criterion of respect for it, for those who talk about it, is the implementation of the resolutions of the Security Council and the United Nations regarding the Palestine question.

His excellency added: We respect the opinion of those who talk about international legitimacy when this legitimacy is applied to the Palestine question.

The president said that Iraq wants peace, seeks dialogue as a road to peace, and believes that the issues in the region are linked together. He added that if international intervention is sought, there should be a linkage between the concept and the solutions. But if those concerned find it difficult to address this issue, let the Arabs solve their problems by themselves; they are capable of doing so.

President Saddam Husayn reiterated Iraq's rejection of the double-standard policy followed by those who talk about international legitimacy. He said: Whether or not some people accept this, we do not accept it. His excellency asked: Why are the UN resolutions not applied so that Palestine will be liberated and restored to its people and the Golan is returned to Syria?

His excellency said: We do not seek war; we seek peace. We are good builders, and the good builders do not seek war. We like our people and seek happiness and dignity for them. But, if we have to fight, we will fight in defense of our freedom, dignity, and independece.

Rizoali Odzhiyev, member of the Supreme Soviet Presidium, expressed his appreciation and that of the accompanying delegation for the president and his meeting with them. He affirmed that the Palestine question should be resolved, and that many resolutions were adopted on this issue, but they were not applied. He also expressed his respect for and pride in the friendship between the Iraqi and Soviet peoples.

The delegation presented to the president a symbolic gift representing the victory of the forces of goodness over the forces of evil.

The meeting was attended by National Assembly Speaker Sa'di Mahdi Salih, Culture and Information Minister Latif Nusayyif Jasim, and the Soviet ambassador in Baghdad.

Ramadan Meets Delegation

JN0301080091 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Taha Yasin Ramadan, Revolution Command Council member and first deputy prime minister, this evening received the delegation of the soldiers-internationalists committee at the Supreme Soviet Presidium, headed by the committee Deputy Chairman Rizolai Odzhiyev. Ramadan stressed that true peace can be achieved through equal dialogue and sincere desire to discuss all problems using the standards of justice, right, and international law, not through mobilization of fleets and armies, threats of war, and adoption of a selective approach. He pointed out that Iraq's peaceful positions as reflected in several measures, and leader President Saddam Husayn's 12 August initiative, embody Iraq's desire for peace.

Members of the Soviet delegation underlined their committee's efforts to avert war and solve problems in the Arab region by peaceful means. They expressed deep confidence in the ability of the Iraqi Armed Forces and their courage in defending Iraq's rights and confronting the buildup by the United States and its allies. They also praised Iraq's peaceful positions and its numerous initiatives to bring about peace in the region and the world. The meeting was attended by the Soviet ambassador in Baghdad.

170 Soviet Nationals Leave for Moscow 2 Jan

NC0201195391 Paris AFP in English 1946 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Baghdad, Jan 2 (AFP)—Around 170 Soviet nationals trapped here since Iraq's invasion of Kuwait flew to Moscow on Wednesday aboard an Iraqi Airways Boeing 707, civil aviation officials said.

Moscow said on December 26 that it planned on repatriating before January 10 the estimated 1,700 Soviets still in Iraq.

Soviet Deputy Prime Minister Igor Belousov was in Iraq last month to negotiate the return home of the Soviet nationals, most of whom work for the Iraqi petroleum industry.

Minister Cables Saddam on Early Warning Plane

JN0201203191 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1925 GMT 2 Jan 91

["Text" of cable to President Saddam Husayn from Husayn Kamil Hasan, minister of industry and military industrialization, on completion of 'Adnan-2 early warning aircraft; date not given]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. If God helps you, none can overcome you. [Koranic verse]

Your Excellency leader President Saddam Husayn, may God preserve and protect you:

With God's help, the 'Adnan-2 early warning plane, which is an advanced version of the 'Adnan-1 in terms of design, implementation, and performance, has been achieved. And this has been accomplished entirely under the conditions of the unjust economic blockade.

'Adnan-2 took off at 0930 on 15 December 1990 and accomplished its mission with complete success.

Our military industrialization men pledge to Your Excellency and to the great Iraqi people to continue their progress made under your leadership and instructions to provide all that is important to defend the homeland and the nation.

The covetous enemies of the nation should learn from the lessons; they will regret their hard luck if they dare to commit aggression.

May God preserve you, a symbol for our dear Iraq and an asset to our glorious nation. Success comes from God.

[Signed] Husayn Kamil Hasan, minister of industry and military industrialization.

Plane Said To Match AWACS

JN0201184791 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1815 GMT 1 Jan 91

[Text] Iraq announced a short while ago a new achievement in advanced military technology. The second stage of the 'Adnan-1 early warning plane, which is equivalent to the U.S.-made AWACS, has been achieved. The plane was developed at the hands of Iraqi experts from the Ministry of Industry and Military Industrialization. The design of the metal framework and dome, in addition to the internal radar, has been improved.

Iraqi military experts said that this plane, which has been called 'Adnan-2, has a strategic importance that will upset the military balance at the level of the multinational forces.

This scientific achievement was accomplished during the blockade imposed on Iraq, and technical equipment in Iraq has also been improved. 'Adnan-2 can accurately monitor the invisible U.S. planes.

Armed Forces Reassignments Show Saddam 'Anxiety'

PM0201144391 London SAWT AL-KUWAYT AL-DUWALI in Arabic 29 Dec 90 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Security Fears Outweigh Military Fears"]

[Excerpt] Damascus, London, SAWT AL-KUWAYT—Some important military units defending Baghdad have witnessed a number of transfers and restrictions affecting several prominent division commanders since the dismissal of former Defense Minister 'And-al-Jabbar Shanshal.

SAWT AL-KUWAYT has learned that Staff Brigadier General Hasan Jasim Jubarah has been transferred from his position as commander of the 11th Division, 3d Corps to an administrative post. Some of the commanders of the divisions deployed in Baghdad have been transferred to 1st and 5th Corps units. They include Staff Brigadier General Qays 'Abd-al-Razzaq Mahmud Jawad, Staff Brigadier General Husayn Hasan 'Udayy, Staff Brigadier General Muyassir Fadil Shakir, Staff Brigadier General Thamir Sultan Ahmad, and Staff Brigadier General 'Abd-al-Razzaq 'Ali Husayn.

Informed opposition circles inside Iraq believe that the transfer of these division commanders from Baghdad was done in the context of intelligence service arrangements, to tighten control of security in the capital, because the loyalty of these officers to Saddam Husayn and his regime was seen as questionable.

Meanwhile, the following officers have been transferred and made commanders of some new divisions: Staff Brigadier General Sabah Matrud Shuway', 2d Corps; Staff Brigadier General Ibrahim Najm Ma'lah, 2d Corps; Staff Brigadier General 'Abd-al-Samad al-Yusuf, 7th Corps; Staff Brigadier General Ya'mur Zaki al-Khayru, 7th Corps; and Staff Brigadier General Kan'an Mansur Khali', 6th Corps.

These officers were transferred to new positions in accordance with security arrangements which do not permit division commanders to remain in the same military unit for more than one year. The aim of these measures is to prevent high-ranking officers from establishing firm contacts with the military ranks, from getting well-acquainted with the middle and lower levels of officers, and from getting to know the secrets of the intelligence and investigation networks linked to the presidential palace, and entrusted with the task of watching the movements of the commanders, their staff, and aides.

The transfers also included 12 senior Air Force officers. It should be recalled that a few months ago 22 Air Force officers were executed on a charge of plotting to shoot down Saddam's aircraft in the course of a coup plan which was aborted before execution.

Staff Air Major General Khaldun Khattab and Air Brigadier General 'Ali Khalifah Hamad have been withdrawn from their field units and placed at the disposal of Air Force Commander Staff Major General Muzahim al-Tikriti.

Some pilots have been transferred from their active service squadrons at the urgent request of military intelligence in a letter addressed to the Air Force commander. SAWT AL-KUWAYT has learned that they include Staff Air Colonels As'ad Mahdi Laftah, Badri Hassan 'Atiyah, Fahim Jabir Hammadi, and Muhammad Mazlum Husayn and Air Colonels 'Ali Khudayr Farhan, Ahmed Rashid al-Mu'adidi, and 'Ali Muhammad Sa'id.

In addition to these precautionary measures, a decision has been issued transferring a number of other senior officers from active units to the Army's political guidance department—administrative positions tantamount to actual isolation.

SAWT AL-KUWAYT has learned that the decision affects Brigadier General Ahmad Yusuf Thuwayni, Brigadier General 'Abd-al-Karim Habib, and Colonel 'Abd-al-Qadir Jasim.

According to informed observers, these sudden changes show the extent of Saddam Husayn's anxiety about the Army. [passage omitted]

U.S. Trying To Push 'Deals' on Kuwait

JN0201195591 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 31 Dec 90 pp 1, 9

[Editorial: "Kuwait Is Iraqi: A Firm Truth"]

[Text] More than five months have elapsed since Iraq's attainment of its national unity through the return of Kuwait to its kinfolk and to its natural status—the 19th Iraqi governorate. Since then, the Iraqi people's conviction in the correctness and soundness of this national unity has been consolidated and entrenched amid an escalating atmosphere of confrontation and challenge. While Iraq's unified collective will has hardened, its combat readiness has doubled for a glorious defense of its territory, sovereignty, and unity, and of all the national, pan-Arab, Islamic, and human principles and values that are linked to the battle.

Indeed, the Kuwait arena has become a tense field ready at any minute for an escalation and the beginning of the great historic confrontation between the faithful gathering, led by great Iraq, and the gathering of evil and infidelity behind the United States.

This fact has been evident since 2 August, and so have all its dimensions, as well as the national, pan-Arab, and human principles and objectives, and the emerging signs in favor of the front of firm and capable confrontation against injustice and hegemony over the world's destinies resulting from the United States being the sole, unrestrained superpower. Therefore, the Bush administration, along with Atlantic and Zionist forces, continues to act cautiously, because it is absolutely certain that the coming battle will be wide-ranging and with various ramifications whose repercussions and consequences may lead to a defeat which can greatly change regional and international power balances, and which will deprive the United States of any chance to benefit from the position which it has attained following the end of the cold war.

Therefore, the Bush administration and the allied evil and aggressive forces based their calculations and bets on the assumption that they are able to design and run the military, political, and media aspects of the battle in a manner that enables them to wrest Kuwait—the 19th Iraqi governorate—in order to pave the way for them to implement the other parts of the aggressive design against Iraq through an exposed battle against it.

The basic and primary objective which the U.S. Administration has made the focus of its plans over the past five months has been to weaken Iraq's pan-Arab, Islamic, and human extensions by pushing it into deals to make it relinquish Kuwait or part of it under the threat of direct military aggression and tightening the comprehensive siege imposed on it under the known pretexts used by the U.S.-Atlantic-Zionist axis, or by proposing plans for quasi- solutions.

In its evil quest, the U.S. Administration is confident that any Iraqi concession related to its national legitimate rights in Kuwait means not only shaking and weakening the Iraqi arena, but also weakening Iraq's pan-Arab, Islamic, and human dimensions, given that these constitute an additional power factor. This would be through making Iraq concede what might endanger

Iraq's credibility, something which would be exploited as a basis for casting doubts on Iraq's course; principles; values; and pan-Arab, Islamic, and human objectives, for the sake of which it is fighting, what its leadership of the faithful gathering is based on.

Thus, all threats of military aggression and the psychological warfare over the past five months have been aimed at pushing Iraq into making any concession regarding its right to Kuwait or any part of it—or even to make a mere promise to that effect.

However, with his wisdom, bravery, and unique genius, leader Saddam Husayn managed to read clearly into Bush's mind and to accurately analyze all the objectives and covert and overt intentions and to shed light on the dark corners in the enemy's brain. Therefore, Iraq managed to topple all Bush's evil calculations, illusions, and efforts. This made the U.S. Administration fumble in mazes and commit grave strategic mistakes, because it bases its conceptions on illusions, which are inapplicable even under the best assumptions.

In light of this situation, Bush has been left with the last card to maneuver with after becoming certain that it is impossible under any circumstances to push Iraq into ceding any of its national rights. Therefore, he will either launch a war against Iraq—which is now at the peak of its strength, capability, and combat preparedness, and which is supported by the entire faithful and combative gathering—thus being forced to face all the repercussions that would result from the great confrontation, whose destructive consequences will blow away the U.S., Atlanticist, and Zionist concentrations as well as all economic and vital interests of the aggressive invaders in the region, wherever fedayeen action with its familiar and unfamiliar forms can reach—or Bush will relinquish the path of war, respond to reason and wisdom, and deal positively with Iraq's 12 August initiative as an acceptable basis for a solution of all the region's problems and hotbeds of tension in accordance with unified standards.

Under no circumstances will Iraq relinquish any of its national rights, regardless of the aggravated dangers surrounding it. Kuwait will remain the 19th governorate of Iraq. The Kuwait arena will remain a symbol of all that is honorable, aspiring, and sincere in the nation's spiritual and cultural values, now and in the future. Kuwait will be the field of the great confrontation in which Iraq and all the faithful gathering will achieve a great and certain victory. Eventually, Bush will find that his defeat will be terrible and total. Palestine will be liberated first, and with it all the Islamic sanctities in the land of Najd and Hejaz [Saudi Arabia]. The heads of humble traitors will fall, not regrettably, under the feet of the faithful gathering, and all the looted wealth and resources will be returned to their lawful owners.

It is the crucial battle which will pave the way for a new life for the Arab nation and all Muslims and poor people throughout the world.

Spokesman Explains Ambassadors' Recall

JN2612154990 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1428 GMT 26 Dec 90

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Dec (INA)—A Foreign Ministry spokesman has dismissed the speculation of some newspapers on the reasons for recalling some Iraqi ambassadors to Baghdad, noting that this speculation is baseless.

In a statement to INA, the spokesman commented on this speculation, saying that the ministry wanted to use the Christmas holidays to hold consultations with a number of Iraqi ambassadors who were unable to visit Iraq during the past few months to hold regular consultations with headquarters because of the situation.

The spokesman affirmed that the Iraqi position is clear and that the mainstay of Iraqi diplomacy, which is being adhered to by all of our ambassadors abroad, is adherence to Iraq's historical rights and His Excellency President Saddam Husayn's initiative of 12 August.

The spokesman added that the ambassadors who were recalled will be returning to their posts soon.

'Arafat Arrives in Baghdad From Algiers 30 Dec

JN3012201390 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1945 GMT 30 Dec 90

[Excerpt] Brother leader President Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] has arrived in Baghdad from Algiers on an official visit of several days to fraternal Iraq. [passage omitted]

Meets With 'Aziz

JN3012215490 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2140 GMT 30 Dec 90

[Text] Baghdad, 30 Dec (INA)—Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, met today with Yasir 'Arafat, president of the state of Palestine.

They talked about regional developments, with an emphasis on the conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory and the intifadah against the Zionist occupation forces.

In attendance were the head of the Arab Desk at the Foreign Ministry, PLO Executive Committee members Messrs. 'Abd-al-Rahim Ahmad and 'Abdallah Hurani, and official PLO spokesman Mr. Ahmad 'Abd-al-Rahman.

Confers With Saddam

JN0201200991 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1923 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] His Excellency leader President Saddam Husayn this evening received Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat.

During the meeting, they discussed Iraqi-Palestinian ties and means of supporting the intifadah being staged by our kinfolk in the occupied territories, and ways of enhancing their steadfastness in the face of the Zionist

occupiers. They also reviewed the most recent developments on the Arab and international fronts.

The meeting was attended by Latif Nusayyif Jasim, minister of culture and information; 'Abdallah Hurani, member of the PLO Executive Committee; Ahamd 'Abd-al-Rahman, official [PLO] spokesman; and 'Azzam al-Ahmad, Palestinian ambassador in Baghdad.

National Assembly To Hold Session 3 Jan

JN0201141291 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1358 GMT 2 Jan 90

[Unscheduled announcement]

[Text] Ladies and gentlemen: The National Assembly has issued the following announcement:

It has been decided that the National Assembly will hold an ordinary session on Thursday, 16 Jumada al-Akhirah 1411 Hegira, corresponding to 3 January 1991 at 1100 [0800 GMT] in the morning. We hope that the members of the National Assembly will come on time.

[Signed] Sa'di Mahdi Salih, speaker of the National Assembly.

Press Condemns 'Piracy' Against Peace Ship

JN2712123990 Baghdad INA in English 1200 GMT 27 Dec 90

[Text] Baghdad, Dec 27, INA—The Iraqi dailies have sharply denounced the piracy and brutal aggression committed by the U.S. and British navy against Ibn Khaldoon peace ship in the Arab Sea.

The dailies described this criminal action as a bestial crime and a coward act exposing claims of America and Britain on human rights.

The dailies demanded the international community by all its bodies and humanitarian, social and legal organizations not only to denounce these inhumane aggressive actions but to lift the unjust blockade decision from Iraq.

The dailies confirmed that Iraq would retain the right of reply at proper time and venue.

Women Protest Act

JN2712163090 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1500 GMT 27 Dec 90

[Text] Baghdad, 27 Dec (INA)—The glorious Iraqi women have denounced the brutal act of piracy that was carried out by the American-Atlantic forces against the peace ship Ibn Khaldoon yesterday.

In a mammoth demonstration in the direction of the American and British Embassies in Baghdad today, the women's masses expressed their anger and astonishment at the armed terroristic interception [of the ship], that was carried out by the American and British soldiers and their attack on women and children of the peace messengers.

In their shouts during the demonstration, the Iraqi women expressed their pride in the unique leadership of President Saddam Husayn and their determination to pursue confrontation of the imperialist-Zionist scheme that is aimed at undermining Iraq's sovereignty, Arab dignity, and Muslim sanctities. A memorandum of protest addressed to U.S. President Bush was handed to the [U.S.] charge d'affaires.

Representatives of the teachers union and student masses took part in the demonstration. They expressed their denunciation and condemnation of the act of piracy that has exposed the brutal and aggressive American and British fascism. In protest memos handed to the U.S. charge d'affaires, they denounced the impounding of the peace ship and the invading forces' attack on the women and children of the peace messengers.

The Asian students league delegation, which comprises seven Asian student organizations, currently visiting Iraq, took part in the demonstration.

National Assembly Condemns Act

JN2712194990 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1820 GMT 27 Dec 90

[Text] The National Assembly today issued a statement condemning the U.S.-UK act of piracy against the peace ship Ibn Khaldoon. The text of the statement follows:

Children of our great people; masses of our glorious Arab nation; free souls and strugglers everywhere: In a serious, base, and criminal act unprecedented in the history of humanity, U.S. and British naval forces have perpetrated an act of international piracy which has shocked the world conscience by its ugliness and baseness and its disregard for all noble human values. These terrorist forces, which have become addicted to killings and criminality as well as the breaching human rights in the style they have been trained in by the British and American administrations, at dawn yesterday committed a barbaric aggression against the peace ship Ibn Khaldoon as it sailed in the Arabian Sea off the Masirah Island while heading for the Port of Umm Qasr on a noble peace mission.

The mercenary killers have deliberately spread panic and terror among the peace messengers, the majority of whom are peaceable, unarmed women, by surrounding the vessel with seven battleships, including an aircraft carrier. In the meantime, more than 450 U.S. and British servicemen armed with machineguns and bombs were dropped by several helicopters on the ship, and set about beating up women and children, firing tear gas and percussion grenade as well as bullets to terrorize the peace messengers. The aggressors also detained the ship and its cargo of medicines and children's milk, thus forever stigmatizing the U.S. and British Administrations, which have betrayed all humanitarian values and international norms, and atrociously and crudely violated human rights and proved that they are enemies of peace and humanity.

As Iraq's National Assembly unreservedly denounces and condemns this gruesome terroristic crime—which bespeaks the depth of the political and moral bankruptcy of the American and and British Administrations which are, with the help of the support and backing and prompting of the usurper, settler, racist Zionist entity, attempting to ignite a devastating war in this vital part of the world, and whose pernicious and destructive consequences will have an impact on all of humanity—and sends out an appeal to the world conscience to condemn and denounce this barbaric act that represents aggression on man and his rights everwhere.

While this terroristic piracy reconfirms the hostile attitude of U.S. imperialism and its allies toward the will of peace, for the sake of which Iraq and the Muslim world—backed and supported by the Arab nation—is striving, it once again demonstrates that such dastardly acts that illustrate the baseness of their perpetrators will not break the resolve of the people of Iraq, but will only lead to raising the temperature of the atmosphere of hot confrontation toward a destructive war. A true, just, and comprehensive peace will only be achieved through in-depth, serious dialogue to address all the problems of the region in accordance with the historic peace initiative announced by His Excellency President Saddam Husayn on 12 August, and which represents a comprehensive peace plan for all the interconnected problems of the region, led by the Palestine issue—the central cause of the Arabs.

As it condemns this savage crime, which marks a serious violation of the UN Charter and tenets of the international law as well as the humanitarian Geneva conventions and the noble will for peace, the Iraqi National Assembly reiterates that it places itself as a solid, struggling, nationalist force at the disposal of the symbol of the unity of the people and the leader of the march of their struggle—His Excellency the leader President Saddam Husayn—in defense of great Iraq from Zakho to the sea so as to teach the vicious aggressors the hardest lessons, and to inflict on them the ultimate defeat in the mother of battles.

Glory, victory, and pride to the will of peace. And may the criminal pirates, the enemies of humanity and peace be accursed.

[Signed] The Iraqi National Assembly

'Zionists' on Boarding Party

JN2812073590 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 27 Dec 90

[Text] The captain and crew of the [word indistinct] peace ship have pledged to leader President Saddam Husayn to continue to resist the barbaric aggression that the ship came under by U.S., British, and Australian forces. In a statement to an IRAQI NEWS AGENCY correspondent, Transport and Communications Minister Muhammad Hamzah said that despite the U.S. forces' takeover of the bridge, engine rooms, and communications rooms, the crew held fast in the face of aggression, while the women, children, and the crew resisted the landing forces, who treated them brutally. He added that the invading forces occupied the ship for over 10 hours, during which it was left without water or food. They also turned off the ventilation system inside the ship. He said that over 450 troops of U.S., British, and Australian nationalities, accompanied by some soldiers speaking Hebrew, believed to be Zionists, took part in the takeover.

The minister said that the ship's captain and crew rejected the invading forces' orders and threats that they must head for the al-Fujayrah port in the United Arab Emirates, as the ship is still awaiting the sailing (?hour). He added that the peace ship Ibn Khaldoon is still at sea surrounded by 12 ships, including two aircraft carriers.

Papers Call Incident 'Piracy'

JN2812114090 Baghdad INA in English 1105 GMT 28 Dec 90

[Text] Baghdad, Dec 28, INA—The Iraqi dailies published here today said that the incident of the peace boat Ibn Khaldoon had urged the world to consider its stances and the extent of civilization and also urged the world to live up its responsibilities to put an end to the American arrogance.

AL-QADISIYAH daily organ of the Iraqi Defence Ministry said that such crimes perpetrated either by the United States or other parties could not pass unpunished and the world would never feel peace of mind while criminals like Bush dealing with the law of jungle and consider piracy their first job. [sentence as received]

The paper said that the operation of piracy against an Iraqi-bound peace boat Ibn Khaldoon came to prove aggressiveness of the U.S Administration which has never found a means to obstruct peace but by assassinating it.

The daily said that the Bush administration had confirmed with action a reality that Washington turned all its capabilities and potentials into a manner to counter the factor of goodness in the world the same as nonrespect of the international legitimacy and human right.

AL-THAWRAH daily organ of the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party described the aggressive act and piracy carried out by the American and British warplanes against the peace boat Ibn Khaldoon as a flagrant coward act and demonstrated meanness and humbleness.

The paper said that those who implemented orders by intercepting the Iraqi peace boat did not shoulder any responsibility but the head of the United States basically bears direct responsibility because he issued his military orders from the operations room within a plan aimed at intercepting the peace boat .

AL-JUMHURIYAH daily of Baghdad said that the American and British troops who had perpetrated their bestial crime against Ibn Khaldoon peace boat had undoubtedly substantiated that these morals condemned by laws of heaven and ground were the sample wanted to prevail on the globe. [sentence as received]

The paper added that when Bush talked about hegemony of the United States, there has been no doubt that he aspires to the prevailance [as received] of the law of jungle embodied by his troops when they attacked the peace boat Ibn Khaldoon.

Patriotic Front Urges Condemnation

JN2812194390 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1315 GMT 28 Dec 90

[Text] Baghdad, 28 Dec (INA)—The Patriotic, Progressive, and National Front has condemned the disgraceful criminal act carried out by U.S. and British forces in intercepting the ship of peace Ibn Khaldoon in the Arabian Sea the day before yesterday. In a statement issued today, the Front said that both U.S. and British Administrations have once again proved through this criminal act their blatant antagonism to human rights and lofty human values, and that they are tools of evil, terrorism, blackmail, and crime in the world.

The statement adds: The cowardly mercenaries from the American and British forces and those allied with them have committed one of the meanest act of piracy against the ship of peace by surrounding it with warships and helicopters and attacking its women and children messengers with a brutality that embarrasses the human conscience. Thus, they added another mark to their black criminal record.

The Front added in its statement that the criminal act led by the U.S. and British Administrations represents another link in the chain of their terrorist scheme to control the world and its resources and govern the fate of nations to achieve their evil, miserable dream to directly control the world economy.

The Front affirmed that the U.S.-Atlantic invasion of Najd and Hejaz [Saudi Arabia] and the imposition of hegemony over the Security Council to secure unjust resolutions against Iraq and the Arab nation represents the basic link in the cruel scheme to control human resources and play the role of the world's policeman.

The Front appealed to the United Nations, international organizations, and the world conscience to bear their legal, ethical, and human responsibilities, denounce the terrorist and cowardly American and British act, and condemn the disgraceful piracy that brutally and ruthlessly encroached on human rights and violated international law and Geneva conventions.

The Front called on all good human forces to confront the will of evil and aggression of the U.S.-Atlantic administration to commit aggression against Iraq—the heartbeat of the Arab nation—and to force the merchants of war to respond to the logic of justice.

The Front said that leader President Saddam Husayn's 12 August initiative to resolve the problems of the region, particularly the Palestine question, represents a practical, realistic, legal, and humane peace plan.

The Front reiterated at the conclusion of its statement its readiness to stand behind the leadership of President Saddam Husayn to defend the dear homeland from Zakho to the sea and defeat the aggressors if they try to lash out at the sovereignty of struggling Iraq.

Passengers Say Morale High

JN2812204790 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1843 GMT 28 Dec 90

[Text] Basrah, 28 Dec (INA)—Arab and foreign women peace messengers aboard the peace ship Ibn Khaldoon say they are determined to press ahead with their voyage in the face of the acts of terror and aggression they have encountered from U.S. and Atlantic forces.

Contacted by wireless by an INA reporter in Basrah tonight, some of them described the morale of all the passengers as very high, notwithstanding the fact the vessel has been detained and surrounded since the day before yesterday [26 December] by U.S. and Atlantic forces near the island of Masirah off the coast of Oman.

It is to be recalled that the day before yesterday, the peace ship Ibn Khaldoon was subjected to a most serious act of piracy by American and Atlantic forces, who attacked the women and children peace messengers, seeking to thwart their humanitarian mission.

Ship 'Besieged' Second Day

JN2912120590 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2126 GMT 28 Dec 90

[Text] Baghdad, 28 Dec (INA)—The IRAQI NEWS AGENCY has learned today that the peace ship Ibn Khaldoon is still being besieged for the second day running following the brutal American landing aboard it.

The agency also learned that 12 American and NATO warships, including three aircraft carriers, are besieging the ship Ibn Khaldoon near the Omani Port of Masirah.

The IRAQI NEWS AGENCY quoted the women's journalist mission aboard the ship as saying in its today's report that among the aircraft carriers was a very big one carrying 21 helicopters.

The mission also said that life aboard the ship is still normal despite inspection of water and food and that all the people on board the ship are determined to complete the peace mission for which they have come.

WHO, UNICEF Help Asked

JN2912183990 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1530 GMT 29 Dec 90

[Text] Baghdad, 29 Dec (INA)—Health Minister 'Abd-al-Salam Muhammad Sa'id has called on international health and humanitarian organizations to intervene immediately to secure the release of 250 Arab and foreign women detained with a group of children and save them from the claws and terrorism of the U.S. and British troops who are holding the peace ship Ibn Khaldoon in the Arabian Sea.

In two cables sent to WHO Director General Dr. Hiroshi Nakajima in Geneva and UNICEF Executive Director James Grant in New York, the minister said that the escalation of the situation in the Arabian Gulf region determined and acted upon by the U.S. Administration has now become a firm policy. The provocative harassment of civilian targets; the interception of the peace ship Ibn Khaldoon; and the attacks on women and children, the messengers of peace who chose to be supporters of Iraq, are a glaring example of the nature of the brutal aggression being perpetrated against the safety and security of the people of the region, the minister added.

The health minister went on to say: Our people have the right to wonder about the position of international health and humanitarian organizations regarding this criminal act. Likewise, they have the right to ask them to intervene immediately to obtain the release of more than 250 Arab and foreign women, as well as a group of children, and to save them from the claws and terrorism of the criminal troops that perpetrated this inhuman act.

The minister asked the two organizations to stand effectively against these savage and hostile acts, to expose them at all international forums, and to take measures on the international scene that would. [sentence as received]

Committee To Send Second Ship

JN2912175990 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1730 GMT 29 Dec 90

[Text] Tunis, 29 Dec (INA)—'Abd-al-Majid al-Sahrawi, chairman of the national Tunisian committee for warding off aggression on the Arab homeland and supporting Iraq, has declared that the peace ship which Arab Maghreb workers have decided to take to Iraq within the next few days is an act of defiance against the U.S.-British piracy targeting the peace ship Ibn Khaldoon.

In a statement to an INA correspondent in Tunis today, 'Abd-al-Majid al-Sahrawi added that the workers peace ship will carry a group of Arab Maghreb and European trade unionists to send a message of peace to the world. They will also transport medicine and milk for the besieged Iraqi people and children, he said.

The Tunisian official went on to say that the Arab Maghreb trade unionists will defy the U.S. and British piracy in their new ship which will carry twice the amount of medicine and milk carried by the Ibn Khaldoon. The ship will sail from Algiers and pass through numerous Arab ports to anchor finally in Iraqi waters, al-Sahrawi concluded.

Captain Reports U.S. Moves

JN3012160990 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1830 GMT 29 Dec 90

[Text] Basrah, 29 Dec (INA)—The invading U.S.-Atlantic troops have persisted in their terrorist and provocative practices against the messengers of peace aboard the peace ship Ibn Khaldoon.

In a radio contact with the ship's captain conducted by an INA correspondent in the valiant Governorate of al-Basrah, the captain said that 40 helicopter gunships hovered over the ship this afternoon in a bid to terrorize the messengers of peace, the women and children. Meanwhile, eight warships and two aircraft carriers conducted military activities in a show of force both in front of and behind the ship.

The captain said that the glorious Arab and foreign women, the messengers of peace aboard the ship Ibn Khaldoon, met the provocative acts with disdain and contempt. As for the Muslim women, they performed afternoon prayers entreating God to grant victory to His Excellency President Saddam Husayn and to defeat the invaders, the enemies of God and humanity.

Ship Vows To Continue Mission

JN3012160790 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1900 GMT 29 Dec 90

[Text] Basrah, 29 Dec (INA)—Mrs. Manal Yunis, chairwoman of the General Federation of Arab Women, has expressed the resolve of the peace messengers aboard the peace ship Ibn Khaldoon to continue their humanitarian mission despite the terrorist and savage practices being committed by the American and Atlantic troops against the women and children on board the ship.

In a radio contact with her by an INA correspondent in the valiant city of Basrah this afternoon, she said that the glorious women on board the ship Ibn Khaldoon pledge to the Iraqi people and their wise leadership headed by leader President mujahid Saddam Husayn, and to all peace activists all over the world, that they will remain steadfast in the face of the terrorism and provocative acts being carried out by the American-Atlantic troops until the ship reaches the port of Umm Qasr, the queen of cities.

Mrs. Manal Yunis added that efforts to intensify the siege by the U.S.-Atlantic troops have continued, as a Spanish ship has joined the ships enforcing the siege.

The chairwoman of the General Federation of Arab Women said that the women and children, the messengers of peace, have begun to ration their consumption of foodstuffs and drinking water as of this morning because the ship was not supplied with sufficient amounts of food and water.

Egyptian, Syrian Troops Involved

JN3012161390 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 29 Dec 90

["Call from the peace ship Ibn Khaldoon, call to the Egyptian people in Egypt" by Egyptian women aboard the ship Ibn Khaldoon; date not given]

[Text] O our Arab people in Egypt, O free women of Egypt: In the name of peace for which the peace ship set sail under the motto "Access to Food and Medicine is the Right of Every Human Being," we call on the ruling Egyptian regime to halt its support for the conspiracy carried out by the foreign and Atlantic troops deployed in Najd and Hejaz [Saudi Arabia] and immediately to intervene to break the siege imposed on the peace ship on Wednesday on 26 December 1990—a siege that began with a ferocious landing of troops by Americans, Britons, and Australians. It is regrettable that there were Egyptian and Syrian troops on board the peace ship Ibn Khaldoon. These troops used violence against the women and children who attempted to protest the attack peacefully. However, these troops behaved coarsely and pushed the women and children inside the ship and closed all outlets and doors to the deck of the ship for several hours. The warships besieged the peace ship and forced it to remain in place pending orders asking the ship to advance and move in a certain direction and determining how long the ship, its passengers, and cargo were expected to remain held.

There are 283 persons on board the ship belonging to various nationalities, including a representative of the world press, the ship's crew, 193 women and children, including those who were injured as a result of the violence used during the armed landing operation on 26 December 1990. As for the medical supplies on board the ship, they are limited. Hence, it is difficult to bandage and treat some people, because of the potential scarcity of the materials that will remain on board the peace ship during its seizure. We appeal to you in the name of the sanctities under the yoke of Atlantic occupation to remove the injustice being inflicted on the women and children on board the ship. Come to the rescue to end the siege of the peace ship.

[Signed] Egypt's Women, the peace ship.

U.S. Navy Reportedly Blocks Food

JN3112065590 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 30 Dec 90

[Excerpts] The U.S. authorities have barred water and food from reaching the women and children peace messengers aboard the peace vessel Ibn Khaldoon, which is anchored in the Arabia Sea off the Omani island of Masirah.

This was reported to the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY by Muhammad Hamzah, minister of transport and communications. He said the ship's crew has made extensive efforts to obtain food and water supplies for the peace messengers, which the competent U.S. authorities have prevented from reaching the vessel.

He added that the peace messengers and Ibn Khaldoon crew pledge to leader President Saddam Husayn to continue to stand fast in the face of the U.S. and Atlantic forces of aggression until the mission of the peace voyage is accomplished. Muhammad Hamzah stressed that the morale of all peace messengers and peace vessel crew is very high and that they all enjoy good health. [passage omitted]

For the fifth consecutive day, the U.S. and Atlantic naval forces are imposing a siege on the peace vessel Ibn Khaldoon, which carries women and children peace messengers, together with milk and medicines for the children of Iraq. [passage omitted]

Still 'Under Siege'

JN3112191590 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1850 GMT 31 Dec 90

[Text] Basrah, 31 Dec (INA)—The captain of the peace ship Ibn Khaldoon has said that the ship is still under siege 30 nautical miles off Masirah Island by two aircraft carriers and two war naval vessels.

In a radio contact initiated by the INA correspondent in Basrah City, the captain of the ship, 'Imad Kadhim Hasan, said that at 1330 Baghdad time today, Japanese peace messenger Mrs. Itkawa Karakawa and her daughter got off the ship after the health condition of Mrs. Karakawa deteriorated as a result of the attack to which the peace ship was subjected by the invading U.S. and Atlantic forces on 26 December.

He added that the morale of all those on board—peace messengers and crew—is very high, and that they are holding fast against the aggressive forces, and are determined to carry on their mission until they reach the Iraqi port of Umm Qasr.

The captain expressed congratulations to President Saddam Husayn and the Iraqi people and all benevolent, honorable people in the world on the advent of the new year.

Syrian Front Denounces Action

JN0201100691 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0832 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Baghdad, 2 Jan (INA)—The National Front for the Salvation of Syria [al-jabhah al-wataniyah li inqadh suriya] has denounced the cowardly act of aggression that was carried out by the American-Atlantic forces against the peace ship Ibn Khaldoon, which is carrying women and children who wanted to express the conscience of humanity through their adherence to and faith in just peace.

In messages, the front called on the UN secretary general, Amnesty International, UN Human Rights Committee, and the International Committee of the Red Cross to strongly and frankly denounce this disgraceful action, take immediate measures to secure the safety of the women and children and allow the ship to continue its trip to Iraq along with its cargo of medicines and milk.

Students End Sit-In

JN0201135991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1120 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 2 Jan (INA)—Some 43 male and female students, representing Arab student unions and organizations in Baghdad, have ended their five-day sit-in at the UN Baghdad office in protest against the flagrant American-Atlantic piracy against the peace ship Ibn Khaldoon.

In their shouts and slogans, the students pledged to march forward, under the leadership of President Saddam Husayn, to defend great Iraq and to sacrifice all that is dear in order to stop the treacherous aggression by the despotic and tyrannical forces of America, its allies, and agents such as the betrayer of the two holy mosques and Husni. [passage omitted]

Trade Minister Cables UN

JN0201203991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1820 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Baghdad, 2 Jan (INA)—Trade Minister Muhammad Mahdi Salih today addressed messages to the UN Secretary General and all international organizations and bodies concerned with human and children's rights in the world, calling on them to raise the voices of condemnation and protest against the crime of the U.S. Administration and its allies and the piracy of its forces against the peace ship Ibn Khaldoon, which was besieged in the Arabian Sea. The following is the text of the message:

To UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar, United Nations Child's Fund [UNICEF], UN Commission on Human Rights, and to all international organizations and bodies:

The U.S. forces and their allies, who have invaded the Gulf region and occupied the holy Arab land in Najd and Hejaz [Saudi Arabia], have committed an oppressive, aggressive act against the peace ship Ibn Khaldoon, thus exposing women and children to death.

It was besieged by aircraft carriers and warships in order to prevent it from conveying its noble peaceful message to the world nations.

The crime of the pirates of the last decade of the twentieth century, whose evil and criminal spirit gave them permission to mobilize their destructive war machines and expose global security and safety to the dangers of a destructive and comprehensive war, stresses beyond any doubt the aggressiveness of the resolution imposing the inhumane economic embargo against our proud people. That resolution was a black chapter in the record to carry out the direct military aggression plan against our homeland.

The policy to starve an entire nation, which exposes the lives of its women, children, and elderly to the threat of death, has exposed the falsehood of, and has rendered null and void, the U.S. Administration's claims with regard to defending international legitimacy and protecting human rights.

At a time when we glorify the courage and steadfastness of the Arab and foreign peace messengers on board the peace ship Ibn Khaldoon and take pride in their positions in support of the Arab issues that express their close ties to the human struggle for the good of mankind, his comfort, happiness, security, and tranquility, we call on you, on your governments, and peoples to raise your voices in condemnation and protest against besieging and impounding the peace ship, thus endangering the lives of its passengers—women and children. History would then record your honorable position in protest of the war, evil, and the destruction approach. By so doing, you will have carried out a just and human task that deserves our great appreciation and respect.

Shamir: Jordan Moving 'Closer to Israel's Enemies'

TA0201152291 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1400 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir said today that Israel is following the changes taking place in Jordan, including the appointment of five ministers from among the ranks of the Muslim Brotherhood. He said that Jordan is steadily drawing closer to Israel's enemies, and especially to Saddam Husayn—apparently as the result of heavy pressure on the Jordanian king.

Our political correspondent Arye Golan reported that the prime minister made these statements to U.S. Congressman James Scheuer.

Arens: Jordanian Maneuvers Not Threat to Israel

TA0301061391 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0500 GMT 3 Jan 91

[Text] The defense minister believes that the large Jordanian Army exercise is not a sign of a plan to attack Israel. Minister Arens expressed the hope that King Husayn will continue to sit on his throne and that his regime is not being destabilized.

[Begin Arens recording] We wish King Husayn all the best and hope he will continue to maintain his regime. I do not believe that the Jordanian Army is planning to attack Israel. [end recording]

The minister also said that Israel is maintaining a low profile on the Gulf crisis, but will change its policy if Iraq attacks us. Our correspondent Gil Litman reports that the defense minister was addressing a delegation of Canadian Jewish leaders in Jerusalem.

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in English at 0500 GMT on 3 January carries a related report on Defense Minister Arens' remarks to the Canadian Jewish Congress delegation, adding the following recorded remarks by Arens in English: "I think his ability to do physical damage to Israel is limited. My guess is that he knows it as well. Again, in terms of our rationality, it makes no sense for him to try to damage Israel. He knows that we would respond; he knows that Israel's not Kuwait, that Israel has very significant capability, and that if he were to try to hurt us, he would have to contend with that capability. So in strictly rational terms, based on the values that we know and understand, he shouldn't touch us. And maybe he won't. And if he does, he won't have to wait long for our response. But he nevertheless may, and we have taken account of that possibility. I've said on occasion, when people are complimenting us on our low profile, that if Saddam Husayn were to try to attack Israel, our response would not be a low profile."]

Likud, Labor Officials on Unity Government

TA2812111390 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 28 Dec 90 p 20

[Report by Mikhal Yudelman and Sarah Honig]

[Text] Very little chance exists for setting up another national unity government now, unless there is a very dramatic development, such as an Iraqi attack on Israel, a source in the Prime Minister's Office said yesterday. He belittled the rumors that such a government is being considered.

"Only in case of a true dire emergency is a national unity government really likely and in that case, the prime minister would probably coopt the two leading Laborites to an emergency cabinet without offering them portfolios. This would be similar to the setup that existed in 1967, when on the eve of the Six Day War the Likud's leaders were invited to join the government," the source said.

Commenting on the National Religious Party's [NRP] idea that Labor at least be admitted to the aliya cabinet, the source stated emphatically that "no unity government will be born out of the absorption crisis.

"Of course, Labor is dying to get into the government once again, but the whole thing is not likely right now."

MK [Knesset Member] Yitzhaq Rabin rejected out of hand the NRP proposal that Labor be brought into the aliyah cabinet, which he called "a half breed, a confusion of opposition and coalition," or that two or three Labor representatives join an emergency government on the model of that formed on the eve of the Six Day War. Rabin said that if the Likud proposes that Labor join a national unity government in light of the Gulf crisis and the wave of aliya, the proposal should be seriously considered. "But as far as I know, the Likud is not about to make such an offer and woe to us if we crawl towards a national unity government. I don't know who is spreading these rumors of a national unity government, perhaps the Likud. Finance Minister Yitzhaq Moda'i has been talking about it openly, but I don't think there is any point of discussing the issue as long as the Likud sees no need for it."

Rabin stressed that it would be inconceivable for Labor to join a government which has no comprehensive policy on advancing the peace process. He said that after the Gulf crisis is over, Labor will try to relaunch its peace initiative.

Labor Party chairman Shim'on Peres did not rule out the possibility of a national unity government, but only if it is based on an agreed political, economic and social programme. "The problem is not the size of the government or its composition, but its direction. We are willing to contribute to the effort in an emergency government, but are not willing to join as a justification for present government's doing nothing," Peres said.

The national unity rumors received a powerful boost Wednesday night when Moda'i told a Netanya audience that "the re-establishment of a national unity government could be spurred on by the exigencies of the situation."

However, Labor Party Secretary-General Mikha Harish, speaking at the party's Political Bureau yesterday, poured cold water on the excitement generated by Moda'i's statement. Harish said that "it's much ado about nothing, because not so much as a hint of an invitation has come to us from the Likud, and I will certainly take no steps towards suggesting such a thing."

Harish accused the Likud of spreading the national unity rumors and said they "derive from the Likud's sense of failure and the collapse of everything the Likud government touches." He said that if the Likud proposed forming a national unity government, he would present the proposal to the party's bureau.

NRP representatives are scheduled to meet Labor representatives early next week to discuss Labor's joining the aliyah cabinet.

Baker Plan To 'Bypass' Israel Arouses Concern

TA0201100991 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 2 Jan 91 pp 1, 4

[Report by Avner Regev, Dalya Shehori, and news agencies]

[Excerpts] Secretary of State James Baker's plan to bypass Israel again during his upcoming scheduled tour of the region has aroused concern in the Israeli Government. Senior political circles expressed surprise at the decision. They said that with all due understanding for the United States' need to maintain the integrity of the anti-Iraq coalition and despite Israel's readiness to present a low profile, there is no justification for the U.S. Administration's attitude that Israel is already in its pocket.

The circles also expressed doubt about the coalition's ability to hold together after 15 January. [passage omitted]

Jerusalem has pointed out that Israel's surprise also derives from anger among circles close to the prime minister over U.S. stubbornness regarding aid for immigrant absorption. They stressed that Israel is dealing with "an enormous humanitarian operation, in contrast with the Iraqi campaign of destruction," while the administration in Washington is not softening its position on financial assistance and is putting up political and bureaucratic obstacles to the aid.

UN Envoy's Visit Causes 'Amazement,' 'Concern'

TA0201095391 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0900 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Foreign Minister David Levi will confer tomorrow morning with Mr. Guido de Marco, the president of the UN General Assembly and the deputy prime minister and foreign minister of Malta.

Our political correspondent Arye Golan reports that political circles in Jerusalem expressed amazement at the timing of the visit, two weeks before the deadline of the ultimatum to Saddam Husayn. Concern was expressed in Jerusalem over what was termed the parade of UN personnel to the region following the UN Security Council resolution.

The president of the UN General Assembly will not be an official guest of the Israeli Government. Nevertheless, he has scheduled meetings with the foreign minister and with Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek. He will also hold meetings with Palestinians.

Visit 'Not Linked' to Resolution

TA0201193291 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1800 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Upon arriving in Israel for a visit of a few days, UN General Assembly President Guido de Marco said that his visit is not linked to the Security Council resolution condemning Israel and noted that the visit had been coordinated a few weeks before that resolution was passed.

Our correspondent Dan Eshel notes that De Marco emphasized that his visit is related only to the condition of Palestinian refugees in the territories, since UNRWA [UN Relief and Works Agency] is subordinate to the UN General Assembly.

De Marco added that the Palestinian question and the crisis in the Persian Gulf are two different matters. De Marco will confer with Foreign Minister Levi tomorrow and depart for Jordan on Saturday.

De Marco Meets With Levi

TA0301120291 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 3 Jan 91

[Text] The Iraqi aggression in Kuwait poses a threat to small nations. This was stated by the visiting president of the UN General Assembly, Guido de Marco, at a meeting with Foreign Minister David Levi this morning.

De Marco, who is also foreign minister and deputy premier of Malta, did not raise UN accusations of human rights violations by Israel against the Palestinians. Jack Katzenell reports:

Just a few weeks ago, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on the Palestinian issue which was highly critical of Israel. Yet the president of the Assembly, at his meeting this morning with Foreign Minister David Levi, did not mention the accusations made in the resolution.

Guido de Marco's diplomatic approach may be a reflection of the more balanced, less anti-Israel and pro-Libyan line adopted by the present Maltese Government, when it ousted the administration of Dom Mintoff. De Marco did say that Israel should consider the views of the international community on the need to solve the Palestinian problem.

He said the United Nations is worried about the consequences that would ensue from a war in the Gulf, but Iraq's swallowing of Kuwait posed a threat to Israel, Malta, and every small country.

De Marco rejected criticism from officials in Jerusalem, who said his visit cannot do any good and is untimely.

[Begin De Marco recording] I think it is timely. It is timely because the two matters are completely different. We have to keep no linkage between the two, and besides, because I don't want to keep any linkage between the two, I don't want to be inhibited by the Gulf crisis from looking into matters which happen to refer to Palestinian refugees. [end recording]

Foreign Minister David Levi asked the visitor why the United Nations never urged Jordan to establish a Palestinian state when the Hashemite Kingdom, not Israel, ruled Judaea and Samaria. Are we to understand that justice awakens only when Israel is in control? Levi asked.

The assistant coordinator of activities in the administered territories, Brigadier General Freddy Zakh, told de Marco that Israel inherited a neglected region in 1967 and brought an infrastructure of water, electricity, and other modern services to the most remote villages. Israel has resettled 100,000 Palestinian refugees in new neighborhoods, Zakh told de Marco, and I am sure that your Palestinian hosts will not be taking you to visit al-Shifa' Hospital in Gaza, in which Israel has invested $30 million.

Official Objects to Luxembourg Minister's Remarks

TA3112174990 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1500 GMT 31 Dec 90

[Text] Yosef Hadas, the Foreign Ministry's deputy director general for West Europe, has said that Israel will take action to prevent a deal between the EC and Iraq at our expense. He was reacting to the remarks of Jacques Poos, the foreign minister of Luxembourg and current president of the EC Council of Ministers, who said that after Iraq withdraws from Kuwait the EC would agree to discuss all aspects of the Middle East problem, including what he termed Israel's natural borders.

Mr. Hadas told our correspondent Gid'on Remez that Israel's representatives at the EEC institutions in Brussels would take issue with Poos' remarks before the meeting of the EC foreign ministers this weekend.

Sanctions on New Investments in RSA May Be Lifted

TA1612113690 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 16 Dec 90 p A5

[Report by political correspondent 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Text] The EC Council of Ministers' decision to remove the sanctions against new investments in the Republic of South Africa [RSA] will soon lead to a similar Israeli decision, political sources in Jerusalem stated last night. In a recent debate at the Foreign Ministry, it was concluded that Israel would for the time being adhere to its 1987 decision concerning measures against South Africa, but would not be the last country to remove sanctions and would emulate the EC's moves.

Senior Foreign Ministry officials and Tzvi Gov-Ari, Israel's ambassador to South Africa, have recently submitted to the Cabinet a draft proposal that would allow the signing of new contracts with South Africa. Those contracts would allow, among other things, the purchase of prefabs for immigrants. Re'uven Merhav, the Foreign Ministry's director general, is one of the officials who recommended the deal.

In contrast, officials in charge of Israeli-U.S. relations fear that the removal of sanctions prior to a similar move by the United States might adversely affect bilateral relations. The South African Government has recently begun restricting the transfer of donations from the local Jewish community to Israel. Although the South African Embassy in Israel denies that this is in any way related to the sanctions, officials in Jerusalem believe there is a connection.

South Africa's Ambassador Johan Viljoen has recently called on Israel to reassess its policy toward South Africa in view of the reforms in apartheid and the conciliatory steps toward the blacks. Israel recently invited President Frederik de Klerk to visit, but the South Africans postponed a visit two months ago and have not yet set another date for the visit.

Annual Survey on Income, Poverty Published

TA0101093791 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 1 Jan 91 p 10

[Report by Alisa Odenheimer]

[Excerpts] While the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting slightly richer, the position of the middle class is worsening, National Insurance Institute (NII) Director-General Mordekhay Tzipori said yesterday.

"The situation of the very poorest families is being improved by the NII allowances," Tzipori said at a Jerusalem press conference yesterday, marking the publication of the NII's 1989 annual survey. He noted that in 1989, the disposable income of 12.8 percent of the families in this country put them below the poverty line, down from 14.1 percent in 1988.

The survey showed that the income gap between the middle-income earners and the high-income earners is widening, while at the same time the gap between the lowest-income earners and the middle-income earners is shrinking.

Tzipori noted that the highest 10 percent of wage earners increased their slice of the national income pie from 23 percent in 1988, to nearly 24 percent in 1989.

But Tzipori emphasized that despite the improvement in the poverty figures, there were still 118,000 families—439,500 people, including 200,000 children—living below

the poverty level in 1989. This level, in September 1990 terms, is defined as NIS [new Israeli shekel] 550 for singles, NIS 875 for couples and NIS 1,400 for a family of four.

He also warned that the Finance Ministry's decision to end the linkage between the inflation rate and NII allowances would mean that the allowances, in real terms, would shrink considerably during the coming year. [passage omitted]

The NII report shows that in 1989, 47.1 percent of all NII payments went to the lowest 20 percent of all income groups, while only 7.7 percent went to the top 20 percent of income earners. At the same time, 64.4 percent of the funds paid into NII came from the top 20 percent of all income earners, while the lowest 20 percent of all income earners contributed nothing.

Territories' 1988-89 Economic Activity Declines

TA0101114691 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 1 Jan 91 p C2

[Report by Judy Meltz]

[Text] A sharp decline in economic activity in the territories was registered in 1988 and 1989, compared to the two previous years. In the West Bank, domestic product and per capita disposable income were seven to 10 percent below the level of the previous two years—a three to five percent average annual drop. This was reported by the Central Bureau of Statistics yesterday.

At the same time, the decline in the Gaza Strip was even greater: domestic product shrunk by some 10 to 11 percent (five to six percent annually), and disposable income dropped by 15 to 16 percent per capita (an eight percent annual average). The decline in income in the Gaza Strip is linked with the relatively large drop in income from labor in Israel, which makes up a large part of the total income in the Gaza Strip: In 1986 and 1987 it made up nearly 40 percent, compared to some 20 percent in the West Bank.

Here are some major findings:

—GDP: Relatively good olive crops modified the decline in GDP in the West Bank in 1988 and 1989. Olive produce included, the GDP dropped some one to two percent on an annual average from 1986 and 1987; if olives are excluded, the decline was some three to five percent. The GDP dropped some one to two percent in the Gaza Strip as well.

—Agriculture: Being the main business, it expanded by an average 16 percent a year in 1988 and 1989; olives excluded, agriculture expanded by some 9 percent annually. In the Gaza Strip, agriculture expanded by some eight percent.

—Industry: Industrial product dropped by some six percent in the West Bank and five percent in the Gaza Strip on an annual average.

—Income from labor outside the territories rose by some three percent in the West Bank and dropped by some 13 percent in the Gaza Strip on an annual average.

1990 Population Growth Rate Highest in 39 Years

TA0101161391 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 1 Jan 91

[Text] Last night, the population of Israel numbered 4.882 million —an annual growth of 5.7 percent. This is one of the findings published by the Central Bureau of Statistics.

Our correspondent Menahem Friedman notes that this is the highest growth rate in 39 years.

Knesset Group To Review Immigration in Ethiopia

TA0101104791 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 1 Jan 91 p A5

[Report by 'Irit Rosenblum and ITIM]

[Text] Knesset Member [MK] Mikha'el Kleiner, chairman of the Knesset Immigration and Absorption Committee, has said that by the end of 1991 all 20,000 Ethiopian Jews waiting in Addis Ababa will have immigrated to Israel. Kleiner left for Ethiopia yesterday at the head of an official Knesset delegation that includes MK's Nava Arad and Ya'ir Sprinzak.

The delegation, which was officially invited by the Ethiopian authorities, will confer with government officials and may be granted an audience with President Mengistu.

The purpose of the delegation is to organize Hebrew classes and professional training for the vast mass of Ethiopian Jews idly waiting in Addis Ababa.

The delegation is accompanied by Israeli radio and television crews. An Israel television crew had been trying to get into Ethiopia for over a year to document immigration from that country and the 20,000 Jews gathered in Addis Ababa, but the Ethiopian authorities would not give it permission to enter the country.

Data on Palestinian Labor Force Issued

TA0301093891 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 3 Jan 91 p 2

[Report by Asher Wallfish]

[Text] Israeli employers continue to file daily requests with the civil administration in the territories for large numbers of additional workers from Judaea, Samaria and Gaza despite the troubled security situation, the Knesset state control committee was told yesterday.

"The employers know that if they don't hire the Palestinians, they won't find anyone else willing to do the work," Brig.-Gen. Freddy Zakh, deputy coordinator of operations in the territories at the Defense Ministry, told the committee.

"One-third of the Arab labor force in Judaea and Samaria works in Israel, earning an annual NIS [new Israeli shekels] 800 million, 25 percent of the GNP there. Forty percent of the labor force in the Gaza Strip work in Israel, earning an annual NIS 430m., half of the Strip's GNP.

Zakh said the new immigrants are not likely to replace the Palestinians in the construction industry. "There is no alternative for the Palestinians," he said.

At present, Zakh said, only 40,000 Palestinians work in Israel legally. "We have to enforce employment service registration for all 108,000 Palestinians working here," he said.

Net Government Revenue Falls in Nov-Dec

TA0301100391 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 3 Jan 91 p 6

[Report by Alisa Odenheimer]

[Text] Net government revenue has decreased considerably in the past two months, due to a large increase in income-tax refunds, the drop in purchase-tax rates on imports, and the slowdown in the real-estate market.

State Revenue officials indicated that the slowdown in revenue collection was temporary, and would pickup during the next few months.

In the April-October period, government revenue was 7 percent higher than during the same period last year. But the decrease in revenue in the past two months has put total revenue for the April-December period at 5 percent higher than the same period last year.

During December, video sales were 125 percent higher than during the same period the previous year; television sales were 27 percent higher, and car sales were 5 percent higher.

Building To Start on Arab Land Confiscated in 1976

TA3012100790 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 30 Dec 90 p 2

[Excerpts] The Israel Lands Administration (ILA) has decided to start building on land confiscated from Arabs 14 years ago and famous for igniting the bloody Land Day clashes, Israel Radio reported yesterday.

It said the ILA will soon use its rights to build on some 7,000 dunams of land confiscated from Jews and Arabs in the Galilee in 1976.

That confiscation provoked a Communist-led Arab strike that developed into riots on March 30, 1976. Six people were killed and at least 31 Arabs and 50 police and soldiers were injured when army and police intervened in the protest. [passage omitted]

The radio quoted ILA head Gid'on Witkon as saying that there was absolutely no need to confiscate more land from Israeli Arabs for building in Galilee.

1,500 Reported Settled in West Bank Town

TA3112195090 Jerusalem, Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 31 Dec 90

[Excerpt] Beyond the Green Line, Ari'el has so far absorbed the largest number of immigrants, some 1,500 in a single year. The immigrants make up some 15 percent of Ari'el's total population.

Finance Minister Yitzhaq Moda'i toured Ari'el and said there would be no choice but to increase the burden on the public if the number of those arriving in the country is larger than forecast in the state budget proposal. [passage omitted]

'Prominent' Palestinians Detained in Nabulus

TA0201095591 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0900 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] The Nabulus military court this morning ordered 10 members of a charity committee from Qalqilyah remanded in custody until the completion of legal proceedings against them. Our correspondent Mikha'el Tuchfeld reports that they were found in possession of large quantities of inflammatory Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] material, including various tapes. Two of the detainees are prominent shaykhs from Qalqilyah: Shaykh Bilal Hanun and Shaykh Riyad (Walwil). An indictment was filed against them today. They are being held in the al-Fari'ah prison.

Shaykh Muhammad Abu-Zayd, the director of the Janin area waqf, was issued a one-year administrative detention order for hostile activity in the Hamas organization. Abu-Zayd is one of the preachers in the al-Aqsa Mosque on the Temple Mount.

Health Ministry To Send Medicines to Bulgaria

TA3112111290 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 31 Dec 90 p 2

[Report by Judy Siegel]

[Text] The Health Ministry is to provide medicines to Bulgaria to ease shortages following the collapse of pharmaceutical companies hit by the political and economic upheaval there.

Health Minister Ehud Olmert, after consultations with the Foreign Ministry, announced the planned gift yesterday during a meeting with Bulgarian Ambassador Nikolov Chervenkov. "We will find the budget for it," Olmert said.

The emergency shipment will range from sophisticated drugs for heart patients and children to simple drugs like aspirin.

Olmert disclosed that a medical cooperation agreement between the countries will soon be signed, sending Israeli doctors to lecture in Bulgaria and possibly bringing Bulgarians here.

U.S. Warning to Nationals 'Fabricated'

JN0301084391 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
3 Jan 91 p 1

["A Word" column signed by AL-DUSTUR: "Jordan Is Stable in Spite of Them"]

[Text] The United States is used to warning its nationals to leave a certain country in the world when it wants to suggest that stability in that country is under threat for some reason or another, which is usually fabricated.

Washington quickly finds response from its allies to take the same step within the framework of a frenzied campaign aimed at taking revenge from the concerned country for reasons dictated by the priorities of psychological warfare.

Jordan was recently subjected to such a campaign when the U.S. Administration warned its nationals to leave Jordan before 10 January under the excuse that stability in this steadfast country is threatened with the approach of 15 January, the deadline set by the UN Security Council for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait.

He who studies the U.S. campaign will notice that it concentrates on Jordan, Yemen, and Sudan—the Arab countries that supported right in the Gulf crisis. Those positions deserved to be punished by the United States and its allies and punishment was not limited only to the imposition of an air, land, and sea blockade against Jordan to weaken it, but went beyond that to warn the U.S. nationals against staying in Jordan.

The United States was not alone in this flagrant hostile position. Other foreign countries, particularly Britain and Denmark, showed solidarity with it by urging their nationals to leave Jordan as soon as possible.

These fabricated warnings do not reflect the reality in Jordan, which, throughout its history, has never known terrorist acts against foreigners in spite of all the serious crises and pressing circumstances it has faced.

We believe those warnings are part of the psychological warfare launched against Jordan to create a state of fear among its citizens and are in line with the concentrated Israeli campaign against this country. This makes us wonder about the identity of the "big schemer" who is behind the marketing of those false statements and premeditated plans against Jordan's safety, security, and sovereignty.

Jordan will remain a stable country despite all those suspect campaigns, despite all the enemy calculations, and despite everything hatched against it in the dark because the cohesion between its leadership and people will be able to prove the falsity of those fabrications and allegations and guarantee the deep-rooted stability.

Everyone knows that Jordan's Arab nature provides for all foreign guests the security and protection in the good and bad times. Every one also knows that the Islamic values, which the people of this country have, will give every visitor and resident the good care, protection, and hospitality until he reaches his destination safely.

The warnings made by the embassies, which resemble an owl hooting [a bad omen in Arab culture], are part of the evil psychological warfare scheme which indirectly aims at creating a state of fear among Jordanians and panic within the fearful people. The planners will fail in their plans and Jordan, which is Arab in its nature and Muslim in its values, will remain impregnable and firm against the attempts to create fear and panic.

Foreigners Said 'Safe'

JN0301095491 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic
3 Jan 91 p 20

["Seven Days" column by AL-RA'Y Chief Editor Mahmud al-Kayid: "Foreign Nationals Are Safe in Our Country"]

[Text] Day in, day out, radios and news agencies are coming out with warnings and statements made by the Western foreign ministries asking their nationals residing in Jordan or Yemen to leave before 15 January, the date set by the Security Council for the Iraqi troops' withdrawal from Kuwait.

If the matter was confined to the concern of those nationals' governments for the safety of their citizens in the event of war in the region and the possibility of it extending to all states in the region, we would have said this opinion could be right. But, those governments use unrealistic excuses that have nothing to do with the safety and protection of those nationals' lives. Those governments claim they urge and advise their nationals to leave those countries out of fear of attacks against them by those countries' citizens if war breaks out or if a military confrontation takes place in the Gulf.

The gentlemen in the British Foreign Office and other foreign ministries have forgotten that our Jordanian people do not deal with foreign nationals on the basis of their governments' attitude toward our national and pan-Arab causes, and that the foreigner in our country, and in any other Arab country, is a guest who will receive the care, protection, and security he deserves in accordance with the norms of hospitality and welcome.

Fear for the foreign nationals from the Arab citizen is a false fear and is the result of the prejudiced and spiteful mentality against peoples, which still lives in the minds of the inheritors of the British colonialist empire and which gives no value or weight to human beings.

Jordan was, and still is an oasis of security and stability. All foreign nationals in our country are our guests and no one can be subjected to any harm because of his nationality or because his government is taking a hostile stand against our nation. The citizen is one thing, the government is another and these are facts and principles which do not need any proof or evidence. The popular and

official Jordan respects the will of those peoples and the human rights and knows that many of the people in those countries support Arab rights and urge their governments to stop interfering in our regional affairs. Even more, mass demonstrations are staged in the capitals and cities of the United States and Western countries in which scores of thousands of citizens take part to declare, loudly: No to war, aggression, and injustice and oppression; Yes to right, justice, and peace.

Consequently, the lives of foreign nationals—be they journalists, tourists, businessmen, and civilians—are safe in Jordan. This is because our people are fully aware that the oppressive ruling cliques in the United States, Britain, and other countries have their own stand, while peoples and innocent civilians have another.

U.S. Navy Keeps Vessels From al-'Aqabah

JN0301102291 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 3 Jan 91 pp 1, 13

[By Hani al-Duwayk]

[Excerpts] Amman—The U.S. naval ship No. 40, stationed in the Straits of Tiran at the entrance to al-'Aqabah Port, yesterday prevented the Yugoslav-flagged vessel "Lyndchi" [name as published] from entering al- 'Aqabah Port without giving any reasons at all. The vessel was returned to Djibouti Port after 24 containers on board were searched. The "Lyndchi" was scheduled to unload its cargo of around 100 containers imported by Jordanian merchants and load between 80 to 90 containers of Jordanian exports. The vessel is chartered by the Italian International Lines, Messina, which has been operating a regular line to al-'Aqabah since 1973, shipping ordinary goods, containers, and cars. [passage omitted]

U.S., British, Spanish, and other allied naval units have seized a number of al-'Aqabah-bound freight vessels in the Straits of Tiran since dawn yesterday and subjected them to extraordinary search campaigns. As of yesterday evening, it was not known whether those vessels were allowed to enter al-'Aqabah Port or were prevented from continuing on course.

The Sudanese vessel "White Nile," with 120 containers for Jordanian merchants on board, and the Singapore-registered vessel "Kota Singa," chartered by the Pacific International Lines, with 224 containers on board, were among those vessels.

Chief of Staff on Gulf, Military Burdens

JN3112194690 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 31 Dec 90

[Excerpts] In the presence of His Majesty King Husayn, supreme commander of the Armed Forces, and at the invitation of the Armed Forces, the speakers and members of both Houses of Parliament visited the Armed Forces. Details in the following report:

[Begin recording] [Unidentified reporter] In the presence of His Majesty King Husayn, supreme commander of the Armed Forces, and at the invitation of the General Command, the speakers and members of both Houses of Parliament visited the Armed Forces today, during which they were briefed on the role of the Armed Forces and the popular army. At the beginning of the visit, Chief of Staff Staff General Fathi Abu-Talib welcomed his majesty the supreme commander and those attending. He said:

[Abu-Talib] We welcome you and the gentlemen who are honored by his majesty's presence and his visit to your Jordanian Armed Forces, the asset of the nation, the shield of the homeland, and the symbol of its security and stability—Armed Forces that believe in your wise Hashemite leadership and are pursuing your noble principles, the makers of loyal men, who protect the frontiers and are garrisoned in the positions of honor and heroism courageously and firmly, epitomizing their honest loyalty and affiliation to their country and to his majesty, their supreme commander. [passage omitted]

The current circumstances in the region in light of the Gulf crisis and the resultant division and schism in the Arab ranks, especially among the Arab confrontation states, have added a new dimension to the absence of military coordination and cooperation. This has weakened the Arab front in the face of the enemy's great capabilities and growing potentials, a fact that creates great military burdens for us in these fateful and difficult circumstances. In light of this reality, we must rely on ourselves in supporting and reinforcing our intrinsic capabilities to defend our country and to protect its security and order by enabling every citizen, wherever he may be, to play his role in accordance with the rules and instructions that govern his work and define his duties in accordance with the requirements dictated by the nature of priorities and conditions. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Al-Qasim Views Arab Solution Possibility

JN2412091090 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 24 Dec 90 pp 1, 5

[By 'Abdallah Hasanat]

[Text] Amman—The United States risks to lose its friends and allies in the region in the event of a military conflict in the Gulf, and the damage done to American interests in the region would not be easily repaired, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Marwan al-Qasim said Sunday.

The minister also said that Washington's war rhetoric was contributing to strengthening an Iraqi feeling that military conflict is enevitable and this has complicated efforts to initiate direct American-Iraqi contacts.

Al-Qasim said although a purely Arab solution to the four-and-a-half-month-old Gulf conflict was no longer possible, Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid was seeking an "Arab input" to efforts to avert a war in the region.

However, "the continued threat of the use of force can only invite a reaction that can consolidate an eventual outbreak of hostilities," the minister told the Jordan Times in an interview.

The Iraqi leadership and people "already feel that war is inevitable because the other has made it look like there is no way out but force, and violence just breeds violence," al-Qasim said.

The minister said no one was going to benefit from a military conflict in the Gulf, least of all the United States.

"What is it that the U.S. wants to safeguard as its interest in the region? Is it oil? Would it secure it with the attitude and the pattern it is taking? he asked. "It is quite sure that the area will be polluted as a result of this confrontation. Do you think the U.S. will be more or less vulnerable in the region after a military confrontation? I believe the Americans will lose a great deal of their interest and allies, friends in the region. So who is going to benefit from this?"

Prospects for American-Iraqi contacts, as proposed by U.S. President George Bush but set back by disputes over dates, depend on the attitudes of Washing and Baghdad, he said. But, he warned, "ultimatums" will not serve any purpose.

"One gathers that the U.S. wants Iraq to understand the position of the international community and the U.N. resolutions," he said. If that is the case, he pointed out, it should have been the U.N. secretary-general who carries such a message to Baghdad instead of an American official.

The minister said there had been talk that advisers to Saddam Husayn wee not telling the Iraqi leader the truth and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's mission to the Iraaqi capital is aimed at telling the "truth" to Saddam. "If this is the reason, then it is a monologue, not a dialogue," he said.

"I think that already on a few occasions, at least on the Iraqi side there is a willingness to discuss through a meaningful dialogue, particularly amongst the states who are directly involved in this. Although I think there is no exclusive Arab solution today to the issue at hand, it is still imperative to have the Arab input joined with a genuine international input that would lead to a political break-through."

Jordan does not believe that it is essential that a final solution to the Gulf crisis "should be conditional on a solution to Palestinian problem." At the same time, the minister said, "We do not understand why it is impossible to proceed into parallel peace processes."

Al-Qasim underlined the irony that the Middle East is sliding towards war at a time when international detente has taken roots.

"Since we are living at a threshold of a new world order we would have hoped that this new world order would overlfow to this part of the world," he said. Jordan was also optimistic that the "new world order" would herald peace and justice, fairness and evenhandedness and a sense of total commitment without selectivity to international legitimacy," he added.

Notwithstanding the language or the operative contents of United Nations resolution, al-Qasim said, there cannot be any denial of the "organic link" between the Gulf crisis and the Palestinian problem. The minister was referring to Resolution 681, adopted last Thursday criticising Israeli practices against the Palestinian people but relegating reference to an international peace conference on the Middle East to an accompanying statment to accomodate American anxiety not to link the Gulf crisis and the Palestinian problem.

"In our assessment this is a watered-down resolution," he said adding that he could not see "anything positive" in it.

'Honorable Exit' for Iraq, Compromise Urged

JN2412084490 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 24 Dec 90 p 4

["Weekly Political Pules" feature by Dr. Walid al-Sa'di: "Iraq Needs an Honorable Exit"]

[Text] It is not sufficient to argue forcefully and vehemently against war in the Gulf without complementing the argument with a meaningful push for peace. Likewise it is certainly not enough to express appreciation and understanding for Iraq's position on the entire Gulf conflict without showing Baghdad an honourable way towards settlement. Iraq and its people need to extricate themselves from the Gulf quagmire in an honourable exit that would assure them continued strength and well-being. The Arab World has a vested interest in keeping Iraq strong. The Arabs should be helped by all those who profess love and affection towards them to come out openly and clearly in support of a compromise solution that could keep Iraq intact and potent. In the long run, Iraq's well-being is more relevant and important than Kuwait's per se , and its oil fields. There is a limit to how far Iraq should allow itself to go in pursue of its legitimate claims against Kuwait and its territory. It is clear that there is a point in this Iraqi endeavour beyond which the law of diminishing returns begins to operate on Baghdad as well.

Iraq, therefore, should be encouraged to make a bold gesture for peace over the Kuwaiti situation and its ramifications. It should be prodded to take a giant leap in the direction of peace in the Gulf by suggesting that a compromise is not completely ruled out.

There are so many positive signals eminating from Baghdad suggesting a compromise is possible, but unfortunately they always get drowned by other confusing signals. Public relations is an important and integral part of diplomacy and Iraq needs to pay closer attention to it.

T e sure Kuwait is part of the greater Arab homeland and so is Iraq. As long as Kuwait is governed by an Arab regime that is faithful and true to Arab nationalism, it makes no difference and should make no difference whether Iraqi Arab nationalists or Kuwaiti Arab nationalists are the rulers of Kuwait. It is high time that all

Arabs, true Arabs, go back to the bsics and concentrate on the essentials rather than the form. If all Arab regimes are once again motivated by Arab nationalism and guided by the quest for one Arab homeland, structured in some form of confederation or another, one would not make too much of an issue over which brand of Arabs govern this or that part of the Arab homeland. Accordingly, what is even more relevant and pressing than Iraq's legitimate claims on some parts of Kuwait and more urgent than securing for Iraq an outlet to the sea is the kind of legitimacy that is being contemplated for Kuwait when the dust settles.

Had Iraq made this point its main bone of contention rather than the mere physical control of Kuwait, per se, its position would have been much more understood and sympathised with. Besides it would have been able to avoid going to the extreme of annexing Kuwait. As it is the Arab peoples are torn between two loyalties: one against occupation and annexation and the other in favour of arabs becoming the true masters over their natural resources especially oil and uranium. And when Arab states start treating one another as brotherly countries, as they piously and ceremonially do in Arab summits, then a Kuwaiti outlet to the sea is and should be an Iraqi outlet to the sea as well. Vice versa, an Iraqi fresh water source is and should be a kuwaiti source of sweet water. Had Kuwait and Iraq developed this kind of relationship over the years and established and nurtured a genuine Arab neighbourly relations, the whole Gulf crisis would not have arisen in the first place.

Yet, other Arab nationalists would warn that foreign countries, especially those with a vested interest in Arab oil would never want good Arab neighbourly relations to flourish or take root in the Arab World for fear that that would jeopardise those foreign powers' national interests. In fact this has always been the concern and worry of Arab nationalists. To deal with this issue effectively and permanently, one needs to promote democratic regimes throughout the Arab World. The most assured way to bring back legitimacy to Kuwait and elsewhere in the Arab World for that matter is to reestablish democratic systems of government there and elsewhere. Iraq has nothing to fear from a democratic Kuwaiti regime and should make this quest its primary objective rather than territory or oil. The Iraqi leadrship should be encouraged to give priority to this goal. The Iraqi leadership can easily make a declaration to the effect that its government is willing to entertain withdrawal from Kuwait, as French President Francois Mitterrand had suggested a few months ago in a speech to the U.N. General Assembly, on condition that foreign military presence is totally and effectively terminated in the Gulf and a genuine nationalist arab regime in Kuwait, free of foreign hegemony, is established. These objectives are now more urgent and relevant than the Rumaylah oil field and the two small islands off the coast of Kuwait. At least this way, Iraq's priorities would be more wisely articulated and comprehended. Iraq's true friends are duty bound to promote such Iraqi thinking. This way Baghdad can effectively frustrate the conspiracy aginst its might as a regional power to reckon with.

Foreign Minister Voices Hope for King's Tour

JN0201162991 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1400 GMT 2 Jan 90

[Text] Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri has said that the tour which His Majesty King Husayn began today in a number of European capitals is extremely important at this stage—being part of the efforts to find a political solution to the Gulf crisis.

Mr. al-Masri added that the king's European tour is part of the ceaseless activity being undertaken by Jordan—under his majesty's leadership—on all Arab and international levels since the eruption of the crisis so as to spare the region the dangers of a destructive war and find a peaceful solution to the crisis.

The foreign minister went on to say that His Majesty King Husayn's European tour—which will cover Britain, Germany, Luxembourg, and Italy—coincides with the convening of the EC foreign ministers' meeting next Friday, a few days before the 15 January deadline—the meeting during which the EC will discuss the possibility of launching a new political initiative, and perhaps make an assessment of the situation in the region on all levels.

The foreign minister said the new Jordanian activity initiated by His Majesty King Husayn today comes amid signals that confirm that there is a Jordanian, Arab, and international endeavor under way to prevent the outbreak of a war in the region—a war that would be a disaster for everyone.

He expressed hope that His Majesty King Husayn's efforts would succeed. He also said he hoped that the European countries would play a positive role and render a great service to peace in the region through their influential positions.

Tour Aimed at Diplomatic Moves

JN0201135091 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 2 Jan 91 pp 1, 14

[Editorial: "Husayn Addresses the European Mind"]

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn's planned visit to a number of European capitals comes at a time when the Arabian Gulf and the Middle East regions are in dire need of the voice of right, the logic of wisdom, the language of dialogue, the line of moderation, the philosophy of compromise and the middle-of-the-road solution, and other such valuable concepts, which are clearly symbolized by the Jordanian diplomacy led by King Husayn.

There is no doubt that this tour, which comes amid signs calling for some optimism that dialogue will have the upper hand in the Gulf region, constitutes an important

Arab contribution and a trustworthy and credible diplomatic effort within the framework of resuming political endeavors in order to avert the danger of an explosion in the Gulf situation and the exposition of the region to limitless dangers.

King Husayn's forthcoming European tour is another link in a long series of good, tireless efforts exerted by his majesty since the Gulf crisis started, out of Jordan's belief that war will only serve Israel's interests as well as other forces, which are not waiting only for Iraq, but also for the entire Arab nation.

Hence, Jordan has always called for resorting to reason and stressed the need to search for a negotiated solution to the crisis, although that call has resulted in a great deal of misunderstanding by some of our brothers, who sometimes resorted to economic boycott and at other times to political estrangement, especially since calling for dialogue and negotiations will benefit the joint interest of all the Arabs, particularly those who were delighted by the beating of the drums and were dazzled by the massing of troops.

Therefore, the new Jordanian move in the European arena comes as a serious and honest attempt to encourage the EC countries to take the diplomatic initiative, which was about to be missed under the direct American pressure, at a time when the EC countries are trying to make an independent move to breach the wall that America has tried to erect in the face of any political move of any kind and from any source.

Thus, we sincerely hope that His Majesty King Husayn's tour of a number of European capitals will realize the Arab and international hopes pinned on it. This goal can be achieved only if the United Stated abandons the language of threats, leans toward dialogue and reconciliation, takes its hands off the confiscated Arab decision-making, and becomes certain that war will further complicate rather than solve the problem. Undoubtedly, such a position will revive the Arab option as the only option that will lead to a negotiated solution to achieve the interests of all parties to this conflict.

King, Japanese Official Speak on Gulf Crisis

JN2312143890 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1400 GMT 23 Dec 90

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn received Mr. Saburo Okita, former Japanese foreign minister and current adviser to the foreign minister, at the Royal Hashemite Court today. They exchanged views on the Gulf crisis, with the king emphasizing Jordan's call for a political settlement of the crisis to spare the region and the world the dangers of the use of force—dangers that will not stop at human and material losses, but will affect the world economy and environment in light of the enormous military buildup in the region.

The Japanese official praised His Majesty King Husayn's efforts since the beginning of the crisis, and stressed the importance of continuing them to achieve a political settlement.

The meeting was attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the king's political adviser, and the Japanese ambassador in Amman.

Medicines From Japan, Netherlands Sent to Iraq

JN2112122090 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 21 Dec 90 p 18

[Text] Amman—Muhammad al-Hadid, vice president of the Jordanian Red Crescent Society, has said the Society had sent two trucks loaded with 16.7 tonnes of medicines to the Iraqi children which were donated by the Dutch and Japanese Red Cross societies.

Al-Hadid added the shipment—which includes 16.5 tonnes from the Netherlands and 200 kg from Japan—is the second shipment of its kind to be sent to Iraq via an overland route.

The Jordanian Red Crescent Society has acted as a liaison between its Iraqi counterpart and the International Red Cross societies, particularly the American Red Cross, in order to set up a mailing system to establish contact between the foreign nationals hosted in Iraq and their relatives in their home countries.

Red Crescent Presidents Meet, Discuss Aid

JN2512172190 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1638 GMT 25 Dec 90

[Text] Baghdad, 25 Dec (PETRA)—Dr. Ahmad Abu-Qurah, president of the Jordanian Red Crescent Society and chairman of the Permament Commission of the League of the Red Crescent and Red Cross Societies, met in Baghdad today with Dr. Ibrahim al-Nuri, president of the Iraqi Red Crescent.

They discussed Iraq's need for medicine and food for children and the role of the international Red Cross and Red Crescent in providing these. They also discussed the facilities which the Jordanian Red Crescent is providing to transport humanitarian aid to the Iraqi Red Crescent.

Dr. Abu-Qurah arrived in Baghdad yesterday evening on a visit lasting several days at the invitation of the Iraqi Red Crescent. He said he will discuss with ranking Iraqi Red Crescent officials the existing cooperation between the Jordanian Red Crescent and the Iraqi Red Crescent, and will discuss in detail Iraq's realistic needs for children's food and medicines to work toward supporting the Iraqi Red Crescent in performing its humanitarian duties under these emergency conditions.

The Jordanian Red Crescent is providing for the transportation of medicine and food for children that was presented by various Red Cross societies to the Iraqi Red Crescent.

King Visits, Briefed by Prime Ministry

JN2212155590 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1400 GMT 22 Dec 90

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn today visited the Prime Ministry where he met for some time with Prime Minister Mudar Badran. Al-Sharif Zayd Ibn-Shakir, chief of the Royal Hashemite Court, attended.

His Majesty King Husayn was briefed on economic and financial conditions. His majesty gave instructions to the Government to open new markets for the various Jordanian products. He also gave instructions on a number of issues of concern to the homeland and the brother citizens.

King Addresses National Charter Commission

JN3012144790 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 29 Dec 90

["Text" of address by King Husayn to Royal Commission drafting the National Charter during a meeting at the Royal Court in Amman on 29 December—recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate: Brother Mr. Ahmad 'Ubaydat [commission chairman] ; brothers and sisters: [passage omitted]

We meet today after you have completed the important and responsible mission we tasked you with, namely the National Charter project. With this achievement, you have earned the trust we placed in you, and lived up to the sense of responsibility, dedication, and the competence we expected of you. I am confident that what you have completed and the seriousness that characterized your debates and research makes a contribution to this homeland and its people the real importance of which will be recognized by future generations.

The return of political pluralism following the return of parliamentary life to our country completes the democratic structure, which I think has no equal in nobility, and which provides the best security for our march—unsurpassed in depth, comprehensiveness or impregnability. If such work has taken the past eight months to complete, every effort toward that end was deservedly spent, since it is not concerned only with a single stage, but the future, which directs our minds and responsibilities toward this homeland in the loyalty in which we take pride, toward this good Arab people to which we belong, and toward the whole nation, which we take pride in being part of, and in the fact that it has a distinct message to humanity and its aspirations and hopes.

I realize, brothers and sisters, that whatever thanks are offered to you will fail to match your pride and the pride we take in your completion of the National Charter project, which was the culmination of serious, deep, and comprehensive dialogue. Events of the past eight months have confirmed the sore need for this National Charter, which will serve as the benchmark for the commitment of all of us to the goals of the homeland and the nation and their resolve to pursue liberation, unity, and progress, just as these events have confirmed to all of us our fears of the potential consequences for us of the post-cold war era, if this nation's reaction to this ear continues to be based on spurning democracy and denying the Arab individual his rights, not least of which his right to speak his mind and air his convictions. [passage omitted]

'Landmark' Government Reshuffle Analyzed

JN0201090991 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 2 Jan 91 pp 1, 5

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporters]

[Text] Amman—Tuesday's government reshuffle is a landmark in Jordan's political history as it included for the first time members of the Muslim Brotherhood movement and other major blocs in Parliament proportional to their representative weight but excluding the Democratic Bloc.

The reshuffle, which capped six weeks of intense negotiations between Prime Minister Mudar Badran and the various blocs in the Lower House of Parliament, is seen as a concerted effort by the premier to strengthen his government's parliamentary base and assure its survival for many months to come. (The Muslim Brotherhood, riding on the slogan "Islam is the solution," bagged 22 seats in the 80-member Lower House in November 1989 elections).

Badran's second government reshuffle since he took office for the third time as premier in December 1989 has brought in five Muslim Brotherhood members, two independent Islamists and no leftists in an effort to accommodate the growing popularity of the grass roots movement.

Negotiations held between Badran and the Brotherhood in December 1989 broke down over the group's demands for specific portfolios including the Ministry of Information and Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

This time, the Brotherhood gave in on its demand for two of these key posts and settled instead for the ministries of health, education, justice, awqaf, and Islamic affairs and social development.

But the inclusion of two independent Islamists, Jamal al-Sarayirah and Muhammad al-'Alawinah, who assumed the portfolios of transport and communication and agriculture respectively, coupled with the five Brotherhood members gives the new cabinet a more Islamist character.

With the reshuffle the Islamists are likely to exert greater influence in shaping Jordan's internal politics especially that the influence of leftists and seculars has been diluted with the departure from the cabinet of Minister of Tourism 'Abd-al-Karim al- Kabariti, Minister of Labour Qasim 'Ubaydat, Minister of Youth Ibrahim Ghababishah, Minister of Education Muhammad Hamdan and Minister of Agriculture Sulayman 'Arabiyat.

The premier replaced Foreign Minister Marwan al-Qasim with Tahir al-Masri, who was elected to the Lower House in the November 1989 elections after serving as foreign minister. Al-Masri, who chairs the

Foreign Affairs Committee of the House and is a member of the National Bloc in the House, will also strengthen Badran's parliamentary base. Al-Masri also enjoys immense popularity.

The prime minister also gave Sa'd Hayil al-Surur, another National Bloc member, the portfolio of water and irrigation.

Although some mainstream Jordanian politicians expressed dismay at what they see as the Islamists' rise to power, others contend that it is time for secular movements to sit in the opposition and evaluate their performance, which even seculars claim was a failure. Observers believe that the popularity gained by Islamist ideology will be tested now that they are sitting in the seats of power.

On another level, the prime minister retained technocrats who have been working with the Jordanian economy and grappling with its problems over the past two years. These include Finance Minister Basil Jardanah, Minister of Industry and Trade Ziyad Fariz and Minister of Supply Ibrahim Ayyub in addition to Planning Minister Khalid Amin 'Abdallah, who was brought into the cabinet in mid-1990.

Two other key cabinet members, Interior Minister Salim Masa'idah and Information Minister Ibrahim 'Izz-al-Din, who have played central roles in the gradual democratisation process by implementing reforms through their respective ministries also remain in the Badran cabinet.

Army Urged To Rely on Self To Protect Nation

JN0101105691 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 1 Jan 90 p 16

[Editorial: "The Armed Forces and the Popular Army Are Jordan's Shield"]

[Text] The visit made to the Armed Forces by the Senate members and House deputies in the presence of His Majesty King Husayn acquires special significance, particularly in light of the fateful circumstances the Arab nation is going through and against the backdrop of the threats the Zionist enemy from time to time voices against this Arab sanctuary. This is because the visit gives us the confidence and hope that the army of the Great Arab Revolt will honor the trust and shoulder the responsibility to protect the Arab homeland and its strategic depth, considering its well-known preparedness and faith, and thus repulse any aggression targeting the chaste soil of Jordan.

We are aware that our Armed Forces' preparations to confront dangers are dictated by current developments, in which the Arab nation is being subjected to an unprecedented onslaught. They are not confined to the regular army's activities. Moreover, we know that these preparations also include all citizens performing their national role in defending the homeland by joining the Popular Army. Groups of these have begun to graduate from training centers to help the Armed Forces perform their sacred duties and protect the country's depth through support activities required in any emergency.

When we talk of supporting and equipping our Armed Forces, the secure shield and the country's fence, we recall the statements repeatedly made by His Majesty King Husayn to the effect that these forces, which are defending the longest line of confrontation, are not the exclusive property of Jordan. Meeting their needs for sophisticated weapons and military hardware remains an Arab duty as long as the enemies' greed knows no limits and also as long as their senior officials make public statements calling for the establishment of Greater Israel. This talk is being translated into deeds by the influx of thousands upon thousands of Jewish immigrants into Israel. Efforts are being speeded up to secure their emigration to Israel at the expense of Palestine, the Palestinian people, the Palestinian lands, and consequently all Arab lands.

When the chief of staff of the Jordanian Armed Forces spoke of the division and fragmentation plaguing Arab ranks, particularly among the frontline states —a development that created a new dimension showing lack of military cooperation and coordination and a weakening of the Arab front—he sounded the alarm on the imminent dangers to the Arab nation in these crucial circumstances and spelled out the duty to face them. However, none of this will weaken Jordan's resolve and firm pan-Arab positions in the face of aggression and conspiracy. Jordan will rely on itself to enhance its own capabilities in order to defend the homeland and mobilize all of its sons, who will then serve as support for the Jordanian Armed Forces to protect Jordan and the Arab order and maintain this firm position against all challenges, no matter how immense they might become, under the leadership of His Majesty King Husayn.

Communist Leader Views Democracy, Arab Dialogue

JN2412112690 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 23 Dec 90 p 14

[Letter from Ya'qub Zayadin, secretary general of the Jordanian Communist Party, to AL-RA'Y Chief Editor Mahmud al-Kayid]

[Excerpts] Mr. Mahmud al-Kayid, respected AL-RA'Y chief editor:

Several days ago, AL-RA'Y published opinions by some columnists on my interview with [AL-SHARIQAH] AL-KHALIJ. In accordance with the freedom of expression of opinion and counter opinion, I hope that you will publish my reply, and many thanks.

AL-KHALIJ published an interview it conducted with me at the end of last month, which raised the interest of a number of concerned people and politicians. It was also the focus of comments by the Jordanian press. Unfortunately, due to my health following a surgery, I was unable

to express my opinion on the published interview in the aforementioned newspaper and the pertinent comments at the appropriate time. [passage omitted]

In my interview, I said that the major responsibility facing the Arab liberation movement and all its factions, and all good powers in the world, is to prevent war in the Gulf, which might be destructive. The Arabs—land and people—will be the first to bear its consequences, and the Iraqi and Kuwaiti peoples will be among its first victims. In addition to that, we must employ all means to evacuate the foreign forces from the Arab land, whose aggressive and concentrated presence brings to mind the actions of the conventional colonialist occupation that was terminated by most world peoples in the period following World War II. Preventing war and evacuating the invasion forces from the Arab land is the principle task of our party's policy. It is a priority because of its political, economic, and military implications, consequences, and dimensions. Within this context, I called on parties and progressive and democratic movements to stage a popular mobilization toward the Arab-Arab solution and dialogue, which did not please some press commentators. Nor were they pleased by my objection to the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. Some journalists went as far as accusing me of gathering information about the situation in Kuwait from imperialist circles such as Voice of America. To these in particular, and others who are interested in facts as they really are —and in my opinion, which might be right or wrong, I do not monopolize the truth and I say the following:

The Arab-Arab dialogue on both the popular and official levels has become a pressing demand in order to find an Arab solution for the Kuwaiti-Iraqi dispute, and the Gulf crisis in its entirety. Everyone realizes that without that, the situation portends great danger. Jordanian officials have expressed this recently with persistence and clear understanding. The Islamic movement earlier launched such an initiative. Other initiatives are required as soon as possible. All obstacles on this road must be overcome regardless of their kind and magnitude. Should early talk on this subject be a cause for astonishment and attacks?

The other argument that I present is that no country in the entire world either supports the Iraqi occupation or its annexation of Kuwait. This includes the countries that adopted a sympathetic position toward Iraq in the Security Council, such as Cuba, in addition to all Arab states sympathetic to Iraq such as Jordan and the PLO. This position was expressed by the overwhelming majority of parties and political movements in the Arab countries and the entire world.

The United States has exploited the world consensus against the occupation for its own personal ambitions; namely, controlling the oil wells and using them to extricate itself from its strangling economic crisis, which is evident in the big deficit in its budget, balance of payments, and large foreign debt. For this reason, it is the only beneficiary of the Gulf crisis, because it has gained great economic benefits, in addition to a political and military stature based on international legitimacy, which it is investing in attaining its aggressive aims against our peoples and in its conflict against the economic blocs throughout the world.

As for allegations that I got my information on the situation from Voice of America, I tell this very intelligent journalist that I heard this information from tens or rather hundreds of people, and that I was not alone but I was with others who also heard and that you can ask. I do not gather my information from imperialist circles or their polices or data. He is fully aware that when I took a stand against the International Monetary Fund and its aggressive policy against our people, the same journalist volunteered to confront me during the electoral campaign in contravention of the norms in these situations—I am merely stating, not defaming. I think the same journalist has heard about the recent voting in the United Nations in this regard.

Finally, some people were stirred up by the talk about democracy. To these, I say that the experience of the world demonstrates that the absence of democracy has caused great harm to the peoples' progress. To those who fear talk about democracy, I say that we must look at the results of the absence of democracy and popular participation, its effect on the earthquake that shook and is still reacting in Eastern Europe, and its destructive effects on Third World countries and peoples, which are suffering immense debts, failure to develop, and other things. Today, it clear that it is not possible to adopt any measures or policies without democracy and popular participation, regardless of the credibility and awareness of the executive side.

Finally, I hope that some people will be willing to hear the various opinions on democracy, and not attempt to impose the democracy of the sole opinion.

Royal Decree Issued Endorsing 1991 Budget

JN0101125691 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 1 Jan 91 p 1

[Text] Amman, AL-DUSTUR—A Royal decree has been issued endorsing the general budget law for the year 1991 which will be published in a special issue of the Official Gazette today.

The budget figures for the new fiscal year total 1,109,210,000 dinars; expenditures amount to 902.5 million dinars.

Finance Minister Basil Jardanah will today issue the financial disbursement order according to which funds can be withdrawn from the state general budget for the year 1991.

10 Killed in Israeli Raid on Southern Lebanon

JN3112201790 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1940 GMT 31 Dec 90

[Military communique issued by the PLO; date not given]

[Text] At midnight on 30-31 December 1990, Israeli warplanes raided an area to the east of Sidon, causing the martyrdom of 10 brother strugglers and the wounding of seven others. This air raid is part of the major military operation Israel is preparing in southern Lebanon. Three days ago, Israel moved military forces estimated at two brigades to the border strip. While recording these facts, the PLO holds Israel responsible for its cowardly act against Palestinian targets in this region, which is heavily populated by Palestinian refugees and Lebanese masses.

Israelis Bombard Western Al-Biqa' Villages

NC2912141390 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1400 GMT 29 Dec 90

[Text] The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent in western al-Biqa' has just reported that the villages of Mashgharah, Maydun, 'Ayn al-Tina, and Suhmur are currently coming under concentrated bombardment from Israeli positions on the 'Alman ridges. The Islamic resistance fighters are returning the fire.

The correspondent added that the Israeli bombardment left four children dead and three people seriously wounded.

Palestinians-Israeli Meeting Reportedly Held

NC2712190090 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 27 Dec 90

[Text] Quoting Palestinian sources in Damascus, AFP has reported that Saudi businessman 'Adnan al-Khashuqji met in a European capital last week with a representative of Israeli Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon, Palestinian figures close to the PLO, and representatives of Arab countries.

The agency added that these contacts were conducted within the framework of an American-Israeli plan providing for Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and for implementing measures to turn it into a Palestinian (?experimental) area to be granted internal self-rule preparatory to the establishment of a Palestinian state in the Strip. The Palestinian sources noted that, in the event the Palestinians agree to the plan, Sharon will submit his resignation from the current Israeli Government to facilitate the formation of a new government which would implement this plan.

PLO Claims Israel Massing Troops on Border

NC2912195990 Paris AFP in English 1944 GMT 29 Dec 90

[Text] Tunis, Dec 29 (AFP)—Israel is massing troops and deploying long-range surface-to-surface missiles along the border with Lebanon as part of war preparations in the event of an armed conflict in the Gulf, a military spokesman for the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) said Saturday.

The PLO spokesman, cited by the Tunis-based Palestinian news agency WAFA, said Israel had also beefed up security along the cease-fire line with Israel [as received] for the same reasons.

He charged that in the event of war Israel's "objective will be to attack Iraq, invade a part of Jordan and launch a offensive against Lebanon and Palestinians in that country."

He urged Arab states to be "vigilant" and "take into consideration the dangers that an Israeli attack against Iraq would have for the entire Arab nation."

Amal, Hizballah Reportedly Reach Accord on South

NC2912153090 Beirut Domestic Service in English 1515 GMT 29 Dec 90

[Text] Press reports affirmed today that the Army is getting ready to deploy in southern Lebanon after the conclusion of an accord between Amal and Hizballah.

UNIFIL Spokesman Welcomes Army in South

NC3012172490 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1645 GMT 30 Dec 90

[Text] Timor Goksel, spokesman for the UN Intermin Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL], has expressed the hope that the Army's plans will include southern Lebanon. He added: We welcome the Lebanese state and we will help it within our capabilities.

In his statement, the UNIFIL spokesman said that the al-Ta'if accord has provided many golden opportunities which should be utilized by the Lebanese.

Lebanese Forces Planning Action Against Syrians

NC2812065390 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 28 Dec 90

[Text] According to exclusive reports received by our radio, the Lebanese Forces are preparing to carry out a series of actions as part of an operation codenamed Ihdin-2 [reference to assassination of former President Franjiyah's son and family in Ihdin] against centers of the al-Wa'd Party and the Syrian Social Nationalist Party [SSNP] in the two al-Matn regions. The operation is intended to free the area from the presence of these parties, according to an order from the Lebanese Forces command to their branches. According to the same information, the order referred to the possibility of carrying out operations against the Arab Syrian Army.

Afghanistan

Najibullah Interviewed on Domestic Problems, Peace

AU0101164591 Hamburg DIE WELT in German 31 Dec 90 p 8

[Interview with Afghan President Najibullah by Mostafa Danesch: "We Want to Have a Political Leadership Acceptable to All"—place, date not given]

[Text] [Danesch] Mr. President, four years of national reconciliation policy have not brought any tangible success. The war is continuing. Aren't you weary of your office?

[Najibullah] What you are saying is just not true. The government's policy of national reconciliation has been very successful during the past four years. For instance, all political prisoners have been released, and the Geneva agreements—which are instrumental for a political solution to the conflict—were signed between Afghanistan and Pakistan. These agreements were the basis for the return of the Soviet military contingents to the USSR. The refugees are continuing to return home. To date, more than 300,000 Afghans have returned home.

[Danesch] However, your party still has a dominant position within the government. How about pluralism?

[Najibullah] This claim is also incorrect. The Constitution that we adopted as the most important document guarantees all the people's political and social rights. This Constitution is the basis for the laws on the founding of political parties and social organizations as well as the press law and the investment law which regulates national and foreign investments and thus guarantees economic pluralism and trade on a supply and demand basis. Because of these laws and regulations, we enjoy pluralism of parties and freedom of the press. More than 31 political parties and social organizations are active here. After 15 years, the National Assembly has also resumed its work again. Our party, the Homeland Party, gave up its monopoly and is represented in the coalition government as one of the coalition parties.

[Danesch] Granted, your biggest success since the Soviet troop withdrawal in February 1989 is the fact that you have not been overthrown. However, you have not brought about peace in your country....

[Najibullah] The process of dialogue and negotiations among the Afghans—including the commander of the armed opposition—is continuing. Because of these negotiations, about two-thirds of the commanders have ended the war, or fratricide, or they are holding talks with us. The talks I held in Geneva recently with representatives of the moderate opposition on a political settlement are an essential element and also a success for the policy of national reconciliation.

[Danesch] Wouldn't it be better for the country and the end of the war if you resigned and handed power to the former king, Zahir Shah?

[Najibullah] Our biggest goal is peace. To achieve this goal, we called upon all Afghans at home and abroad to contribute their share. Of course, we have always included the former king, Mohammad Zahir Shah, in our considerations. He could make an important contribution to peace. To achieve a political leadership acceptable to all Afghans, we have suggested holding free, secret, and direct elections under the supervision of the United Nations Organization.

[Danesch] When you went to Geneva in November you met some opposition leaders. One of them reportedly was Mr. Gilani. Is that correct, and what has been achieved?

[Najibullah] Our talks in November with some leaders and activists of the moderate opposition opened up a new phase of dialogue. These talks took place in a cordial atmosphere and have yielded good results. However, I am sorry I cannot give you any details about my partners in the talks and the results of the meetings.

[Danesch] But the Afghan people are sick of this secrecy. They want to know what is going on.

[Najibullah] In order not to jeopardize the good atmosphere for further talks, we can unfortunately not disclose the identity of the persons who took part in these meetings. However, the time will come when we will inform our people of the results of these meetings.

[Danesch] The leader of the Islamic Party, Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, has threatened death to anyone who talks with you. Is that the reason you do not disclose your partners' identity?

[Najibullah] Gulbuddin Hikmatyar has threatened to kill our partners whereas his own people negotiate with us. It is out of jealousy and self-importance that he does not want other groups to negotiate with us. With these threats and by boycotting the talks, he plans to continue the fratricide. His interests are only met if the war is continued.

[Danesch] Gulbuddin Hikmatyar is strictly opposed to the participation of the former king in the peace process. He called upon you to stop negotiations with Zahir Shah. Are you in secret contact with Gulbuddin Hikmatyar?

[Najibullah] Gulbuddin Hikmatyar's position on this policy is his very own business. However, we informed the public recently that we held a dialogue with Gulbuddin Hikmatyar's representatives in Baghdad through the mediation of the PLO.

[Danesch] You said that 120,000 Mujahidin laid down their arms. That does not hold true for the commander, Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, who has made his peace with his archenemy Gulbuddin Hikmatyar. In addition, a united leadership of the commanders was founded in Pakistan. Are you expecting a hard winter?

[Najibullah] Despite the resistance and the plots of some extremists within the opposition, the situation is

improving every day. Since you mention the meeting between Ahmad Shah Mas'ud and Gulbuddin, let me point out that there have been such meetings and agreements time and time again. However, they never lasted.

[Danesch] You changed your party's name. The Democratic People's Party was turned into the Homeland Party. Did you thereby also change the ideology?

[Najibullah] Our party stands for pluralism and free economic competition. We want to implement democracy, and we want to guarantee the free market economy and human rights. We do not represent any foreign ideology. Our party's essential philosophy is based on a specifically Afghan nationalist ideology.

[Danesch] Many party members are simply afraid of being killed, if your party were to leave government responsibility. Can you give these members any guarantees?

[Najibullah] If we solve the conflict through negotiations and in the spirit of mutual tolerance, our giving up the monopoly on power does not at all create any danger. The implementation of genuine national reconciliation guarantees that no one will be endangered. The overwhelming majority of the party has accepted the policy of national reconciliation and therefore back our giving up the monopoly on power.

[Danesch] According to Agha Khan, the former commissioner for refugees, only 200,000 out of 5 million refugees have returned. How are the refugees to be reintegrated, in view of the fact that their fields are mined and their villages are destroyed by the war?

[Najibullah] We have set up a commission with unlimited powers to remove these mines. The commission is led by the prime minister personally. We realize, however, that removing these mines under the present conditions cannot be accomplished by the Afghan Government alone. We require not only the support of the Afghan people, we also need help from international organizations.

[Danesch] The United Nations and one of its organizations, which are dealing with minesweeping, have complained that neither Moscow nor your government have given them maps of the mine fields. In addition, the Mujahidin have not been squeamish in distributing mines all over the country.

[Najibullah] When the Soviet troops wanted to leave Afghanistan, they destroyed many mine fields themselves. The remaining maps of their mine fields were given to our army. We will do our work according to these maps. As regards the mines of the opposition, one has to say that they laid these mines without any planning. There are no maps or documents on these mine fields.

[Danesch] The Soviets are still delivering foodstuffs to your country. How will you stand on your own if they cannot or do not want to make any more deliveries?

[Najibullah] When the war is over, our country with its fertile land will be able to meet the demands of life. Therefore, peace is our supreme goal. The support by the Soviet Union is based on bilateral agreements and will be continued.

[Danesch] The West is still supporting the positions of the mujahidin. Is this why you have put out your feelers toward the U.S. Administration?

[Najibullah] We think that over the past years profound changes have been noticed in the East's way of thinking. Until recently the West and the United States supported a military solution to the conflict. Even though today they are still delivering weapons and ammunition to our enemies, they are also supporting a political solution. Basically, they are supporting free elections with the participation of all political forces. We, on our side, continually brief the West about our proposals for peace.

[Danesch] After reunification Germany is one of the most influential countries in the world. Could the FRG play an essential role in solving the Afghan conflict?

[Najibullah] In the past, Germany supported Afghanistan in many economic, cultural, and agricultural projects. Today, when we are trying to end the war, we have to rebuild the country again, to restore the factories and enterprises. We expect the FRG above all to engage in activities which intensify a political solution to the conflict at the international level. And we expect Germany to support our population in the reconstruction.

[Danesch] Afghanistan's economic reconstruction requires capital investments. How will you convince German investors to invest their money in Afghanistan and what guarantees will you give them?

[Najibullah] Over the past years there have been many upheavals in Afghanistan. These upheavals have laid the foundation for my market economy as an economic system. Therefore, there are good possibilities for foreign capital investments, also from Germany. The law on private domestic and foreign capital investments guarantees the rights of the investors. If German capital investors were inclined to cooperate with our country, the government would welcome this cordially.

Comments on Media 'Shortcomings'

LD0301093191 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0509 GMT 3 Dec 90

[Excerpt] Jan. 2. BAKHTAR—Najibullah, president of the Republic of Afghanistan today in the presidential office had a meeting with the responsibles of the mass media of the country.

In this meeting President Najibullah while evaluating the situation of the mass media and making outstanding the shortcomings and difficulties in their works and drew their attention to their duties for reflecting important events, views and requirements of people.

He stated that the mass media is playing an important role in changing the public opinion, particularly in our country where a considerable number of the people are deprived of literacy.

He added in today's meeting that though the positive aspects of the works are not away from our consideration, we know the existing difficulties, as well as the material and technical shortcomings and the shortages of professional cadres in the field.

President Najibullah besides reckoning the existing problems and lack of professionals in the sphere of mass media said that in my opinion following stereotype style, being unwillingness towards collecting first hand information, and a number of technical and professional shortcomings has caused the appearance of big deficits in the work of dailies and magazines. Mostly, publications are not "understandable for the listener", and the level of knowledge of people is not being considered.

Pluralism of views and ideas' is rarely reflecting. Attempts must be made for expressing the acute issues which have direct link with the life of the people and they must not be presented as monologue which are being published in non-understandable frames but should be presented in a dialogue style. [passage omitted]

Bangladesh

Prison Revolt Spreads From Dhaka to Other Cities

BK0101123491 Hong Kong AFP in English 1225 GMT 1 Jan 91

[Text] Dhaka, Jan 1 (AFP)—A prison revolt Tuesday spread to several other Bangladesh districts as rebellious inmates in the Dhaka jail continued an indefinite hunger strike, sources said.

The new jails to be hit by the riots were at Khulna, Jessore and Comilla, with the situation still tense in the Dhaka and Chittagong jails, unconfirmed reports said.

The prisoners were demanding the immediate release of inmates jailed since 1982, when ousted President Hussain Mohammad Ershad seized power, and an improvement in food and living conditions.

"They are not taking their meals and were still outside their cells," one Dhaka jail official said, adding that part of the high-security prison was in the hands of the inmates.

Local reports said food was being thrown inside the prison by relatives of inmates who have [been] flocking to the area since the outbreak of the revolt Saturday.

Wardens shot dead three prisoners in the Dhaka jail Saturday and another inmate in the Chittagong jail Monday as they tried to quell the rioting, the most serious of its kind in years.

Prisoners in the Dhaka jail handed over the partly decomposed bodies of the three dead inmates late Monday for postmortem and burial, officials said.

Further on Chittagong Riot

BK3112160090 Hong Kong AFP in English 1555 GMT 31 Dec 90

[Text] Chittagong, Bangladesh, Dec 31 (AFP)—At least one prisoner was killed and 50 other people including jail guards and police were injured here Monday in a prison revolt, a police official said.

The situation was brought under control with police reinforcements from outside, the official said, adding the prisoners had started surrendering their arms and returning to their cells.

The prisoners in the port city's main jail went on the rampage setting fire to blankets and attacking guards with iron bars and bricks, police sources earlier said, adding the rioting forced wardens to fire killing one of the inmates.

This is the country's second jail revolt after the rioting in the capital Dhaka over the weekend which left three prisoners dead and 49 people, including 27 guards, injured.

Police and hospital sources said more than 50 people were injured, 22 of them including six prisoners were treated in the city's government and police hospitals. The other 28, all prisoners, were being treated for minor injuries in the jail, they said without giving details.

The police official earlier confirmed that the prisoners in the crowded Chittagong jail also took several wardens hostage and fired back at the guards with stolen rifles. But, he said, the hostages were being freed and arms returned by the prisoners some three hours after they suddenly became violent late Monday.

Doctors at the government-run Chittagong Medical College Hospital said the condition of five of the injured was serious, including three prisoners with bullet wounds.

The prisoners shouted for their release following the resignation of President Hussain Mohammad Ershad earlier this month during whose nine-year regime many were imprisoned.

Earlier local residents said sporadic sounds of rifle shots were coming from the jail, which houses some 2,500 prisoners against its official capacity of only 725.

Government Denies Halting School Book Publication

BK2212143190 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 0110 GMT 22 Dec 90

[Text] BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] chairman Begum Khaleda Zia has expressed concern over the press reports regarding (?proposals) to review text books. She said the elected government will take a decision on what (?measure) is necessary. The other political parties which

expressed similar views include Jamaat-i-Islami Bangladesh Muslim League-Qadir, Jamiat-i-Ulema-i-Islam, and Bangladesh Mujahid [words indistinct].

Meanwhile, the government has categorically denied reports published in a section of the press that it has taken a decision to stop publication of school text books. An official handout said the reports are not at all correct. No decision has been taken in this regard. But the matter of correction of some spelling mistakes (?in) some of these books is under examination in the concerned ministry.

The 10-member committee formed to examine the provision of the Printing Presses and Publication Act of 1973 will also examine the part of the Special Powers Act of 1974 which relates to press and publication. This has been stated in an official handout issued in Dhaka. The committee would suggest appropriate measures and submit report within a short time.

[Hong Kong AFP at 1339 on 22 Dec with Dhaka dateline reports that: "Some 600 Moslem student activists Saturday protested a reported government decision to stop publication of Bangladesh school text books for changes thought to be anti-Islamic, witnesses said.

The students called on Interim President Shahabuddin Ahmed to withdraw a reported decision to replace the word 'Allah' with 'creator' in the text books, saying it went against the faith and Constitution of Bangladesh."]

BNP Chief To Create Market-Based Economy

BK2112162890 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 21 Dec 90

[Text] BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] Chairperson and Seven-Party Alliance Leader Begum Khaleda Zia has said, if voted to power, her party will create a market-based economy and give highest incentive to the private sector for rapid industrialization of the country. Addressing a public meeting at Kochughe in Dhaka today, she said her party will (?encourage) politics of production. Begum Zia lauded the role of [word indistinct] in the people's struggle against the autocratic regime and said they will build a strong defense to protect national interest.

The BNP leader also exchanged views with the leading bankers of the country and stressed the need for bringing the banking sector under a disciplined order to properly organize trade and commercial activities in the country. Begum Zia also stressed the need for providing agricultural loans to help farmers boost production.

Committee Demands Dismissal of Dhaka Officials

BK2312160090 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 23 Dec 90

[Text] The city liaison committee of the eight-party, seven-party, and five-party alliances met in Dhaka today. The committee leaders demanded immediate dismissal of the deputy mayor and ward commissioners of Dhaka Pouro [municipal] Corporation. They also called for patience and democratic behavior for smooth holding of parliament elections.

Former President Heads 'National United Front'

BK0201162591 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] A National United Front representing 23 nationalist and Islamic parties has been formed with Khandaker Mushtaque Ahmed [sworn in as president in 1975 after coup and assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman] as chairman. At a meeting in Dhaka yesterday the front said establishing Islamic values, a representative government, and economic emancipation of the people are its main objectives.

Former Ministers Reportedly Hiding in India

BK0301161691 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 3 Jan 91

[Text] Bangladesh has asked its mission in New Delhi to verify an Indian press report that four ministers of the ousted Ershad regime have crossed into India. Foreign Secretary Abul Ahsan said this in Dhaka today. According to a leading English daily, Indian External Affairs Minister V.C. Shukla has admitted that four former ministers of Bangladesh are hiding in India. The (?statement), however, did not give their identity. When asked, Mr. Ahsan said Dhaka was yet to receive any concrete information on earlier reports that former Prime Minister Kazi Zafar Ahmed had sneaked into India. The foreign secretary also could not confirm reports that the former Prime Minister Anisul Islam Mahmud and Energy Minister Ziauddin Ahmed had fled to Thailand.

India

Iraqi Envoy Arrives With Message for Shekhar

BK0201162191 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] A special envoy of the Iraqi president, Mr. Saddam Husayn, arrived in New Delhi this evening with a message for the prime minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar. The envoy, Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf, minister of state for foreign affairs, during his four-day stay will call on the prime minister and the external affairs minister.

Discusses Gulf, Bilateral Ties

BK0301144691 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 3 Jan 91

[Text] The Gulf crisis figured prominently in the talks between the Iraqi minister of state for foreign affairs, Mr. Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf, and the external affairs minister, Mr. V.C. Shukla in New Delhi today. The two

sides also discussed bilateral relations and international issues of mutual interest. The talks will continue.

The Iraqi minister, who arrived in New Delhi last evening, will meet the prime minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, tomorrow.

Next Round of Talks With Pakistan Set

BK0201103691 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] The next round of foreign secretary-level talks between India and Pakistan will be held toward the end of the next month. This was stated by the external affairs minister, Mr. V.C. Shukla, in the Rajya Sabha today. Replying to a question, he said during the third round of talks last month, all the issues, including Pakistan's assistance to militants, were taken up. The minister said Islamabad maintains that their support is only political and moral, and not military. But New Delhi is aware of the hollowness of that claim. The minister hoped that the next month's talks will make some progress.

Government Welcomes Sri Lankan Cease-Fire

BK3112125690 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 31 Dec 90

[Text] India has welcomed the cease-fire announcement by the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] in Sri Lanka. An External Affairs Ministry spokesman said in New Delhi that India always favors a dialogue and cessation of hostilities between the LTTE and the Sri Lankan forces.

Meanwhile, the Sri Lankan Government has asked for three day's time to assess the genuinness of the offer of the unilateral cease-fire by the LTTE. According to a presidential spokesman, the government is fully committed to a peaceful political solution to the ethnic problem and would take three days to assess the offer from the LTTE.

It may be recalled that the LTTE yesterday announced in London a unilateral cease-fire in a six month-old fighting with the security forces with effect from midnight today.

Finance Minister on IMF, Multinational Firms

BK2812125690 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 28 Dec 90

[Text] The finance minister, Mr. Yashwant Sinha, assured the Lok Sabha today that the government will not take any foreign loan on terms and conditions which will go against political, economic or the social norms of the country. He disclosed that negotiations were going on for borrowing from the International Monetary Fund under the scheme devised by the IMF to compensate the countries hit by the Gulf crisis. Talks were also being held for obtaining IMF loan under the scheme of standby assistance to tide over the present difficult situation. He told the house during question hour that the country may also go in for commercial borrowing.

Answering a question, he said that the government has taken a number of steps like curtailing the import of luxury items to get over the foreign exchange crunch which, he said, is a short-term difficulty. The finance minister said the Gulf crisis has hit the country very badly and accused the previous government of not taking proper steps at the right moment.

In reply to another question, Mr. Yashwant Sinha said that multinational companies will not be given any relaxation to operate in the country in a manner prejudicial to our interests.

Replying to supplementaries, the finance minister said that the government will not curtail imports meant for productive purposes even though the foreign exchange position is difficult.

Janata Dal President Speaks on Constitution

BK3112074490 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 31 Dec 90

[Text] The Janata Dal president, Mr. S.R. Bommai, has called for amending the Constitution to make mandatory the participation of supporting parties in a government. He was speaking to newsmen at Hooghly in Karnataka. Mr. Bommai said the lack of involvement of the Congress-I in the Chandra Shekhar ministry has resulted in a loss of credibility and creation of instability in the country. He also demanded that the 10th schedule of the constitution should be suitably amended to make the antidefection act more effective.

Election Commission Registers Janata Dal-S

BK2812165690 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 28 Dec 90

[Text] Janata Dal-Samajwadi [Socialist] has been registered as a political party by the Election Commission. This was communicated today by the commission to the party after considering its application made on the fifth of this month.

Swiss Court Clears Bachchans in Bofors Case

BK0201102291 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] The film star, Amitabh Bachchan, says the Swiss judge investigating the Bofors case has told his lawyer that he had found no evidence to link him and his brother Ajitabh to the kickbacks scandal. Addressing a press conference in London, Mr. Bachchan said the Swiss judge, Mr. (Paul Perodain), had informed his lawyer that the Swiss federal Department of Justice intended to declare the Bachchans innocent. Mr. Bachchan said that the court had given the Swiss investigating agency 10 days to appeal against its intention of clearing

him and his brother of any involvement. He said the agency had not appealed and they stood exonerated.

Gandhi Opposes Punjab Self-Determination Talks

BK0201163491 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] The Congress-I is opposed to any negotiations on self-determination in any talks on Punjab by the prime minister with the Akali leaders. A party spokesman today released a letter of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi to the prime minister which reiterated that the Congress-I stands for ending the dispute through dialogue and for redressal of genuine grievances of any section of citizen by the government. The letter however expressed grave concern over the news item that the memorandum submitted to the prime minister by the Akali Dal leader, Mr. Simranjit Singh Mann, relied upon Article 51 to start negotiations for so-called self-determination.

President of Nauru Arrives in New Delhi 31 Dec

BK3112074690 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 31 Dec 90

[Text] The president of Nauru, Mr. Bernard Dowiyogo, arrived in New Delhi last night on a five-day official visit to India. This is Mr. Dowiyogo's first visit to the country. He is accompanied by a six-member delegation. During his stay in India, he will have official level talks on economic cooperation and matters of mutual interests.

Dalai Lama Expresses 'Hope' for Tibetan Autonomy

BK3012144490 Hong Kong AFP in English 1430 GMT 30 Dec 90

[Text] New Delhi, Dec 30 (AFP)—The Dalai Lama said the Chinese people would eventually force Beijing to decide favourably on Tibetan autonomy, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported Sunday.

PTI quoted the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader as telling reporters Saturday in the holy eastern Indian city of Sarnath that there was hope Tibetans would win their struggle for autonomy within the next five to 10 years.

The Dalai Lama said there was mounting sympathy among the Chinese people for the Tibetans because of "our policy for truth and non-violence."

"The Chinese would one day force the communist government to take decisions in our favour," said the Dalai Lama who fled to India after a failed anti-Chinese uprising in Tibet in 1959.

However, he also said the Tibetans' policy of "non-violence" had more impact on the Chinese people than on the government, PTI reported.

He also said he was not interested in a political or government post in Tibet but would like to live there as an ordinary citizen when it was freed from Chinese rule, PTI reported.

The Dalai Lama, who won the Nobel Peace Prize last year, said he favoured a confederation of Tibet and China instead of a separate homeland for the Tibetans.

But he has warned the Chinese Government that more repressive measures from Beijing will make his people more determined to gain complete independence.

More than 100,000 followers of the Dalai Lama followed their leader to India and have been living in the northern Indian town of Dharamshala.

His government-in-exile is not recognised by India or any other country.

Kashmiris Strike To Protest Alleged Brutality

BK2812163390 Hong Kong AFP in English 1042 GMT 28 Dec 90

[Text] Jammu, India, Dec 28 (AFP)—A strike called by Muslim militants to protest alleged excesses and brutality by Indian security forces brought life throughout the Kashmir Valley to a standstill Friday.

Witnesses said shops were shuttered, private cars off the streets and the silence shattered only by occasional militant bomb blasts.

A state government spokesman here reported 11 separate skirmishes between Central Reserve Police Force (CPRF) paramilitary troopers and armed militants in which 11 people, six of them CPRF personnel, were injured.

The spokesman said a 24-hour curfew was in force in the valley's six districts and troopers were on high alert because of warnings the militants would carry out "anti-Indian activities" during the 48-hour strike which started Thursday.

The strike call was issued by the Kashmir people's league, the Kashmiri Islamic Students' League, the Hizbe Mujahidin and the Janbaz force, all outlawed militant groups fighting for the right to self-determination for Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state.

In statements circulated to journalists in the state's summer capital of Srinagar Thursday, the groups said they were protesting "continued and increased excesses and brutalities committed by security forces almost daily."

They also said they were protesting "the false propaganda" that Kashmiri militants had started surrendering.

Eight bomb explosions were reported from different parts of the valley overnight but caused no casualties, the spokesman said.

Shoot-on-Sight Order Issued in Bihar Town

BK3012155590 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 30 Dec 90

[Text] In Bihar, shoot-at-sight orders have been issued in the curfew bound Giridih town and its adjoining areas. An official spokesman said some armed miscreants entered the railway station in the town last night, but any incident was averted by timely police action. The spokesman said in an another incident one person was critically injured by a violent mob.

Curfew continues for the third day today without any relaxation. Patrolling has been intensified in the affected areas. Eighty-five persons have so far been arrested. The curfew was imposed last week following communal clashes.

Curfew Imposed in Bombay Area After Violence

BK0101031691 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 1 Jan 91

[Text] A 36-hour curfew was imposed in Jogeshwari area of northwest Bombay from 1800 last evening following group clashes and mob violence. According to police, the situation in the area is peaceful.

Curfew Relaxed for 4 Hours

BK0301044091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 3 Jan 90

[Text] Curfew has been relaxed for four hours from 0600 this morning in the northwest of Bombay. It will be reimposed after 1000 and will remain in force till 0600 tomorrow morning. According to police sources, the situation in the affected areas is reported to be peaceful.

6,000 Women Among Hindu Marchers in Ayodhya

BK2812161490 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 28 Dec 90

[Text] In Ayodhya, about 36 [as heard] kar sevaks [volunteers to build the temple] courted arrest today. They included 6,000 women. Today, being baikunth ekadashi [Hindu religious occasion], a large number of devotees had gathered to take a dip in the Saryu.

Aligarh Clashes; Day Curfew Lifted in Agra

BK3112162190 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 31 Dec 90

[Text] In Uttar Pradesh, three persons were killed in Aligarh town in group clashes last night. According to an official spokesman, incidents of arson, brickbatting, and cross-firing have also been reported from some localities of the town. The spokesman said some miscreants fired at the police and district officials. As the police returned the fire, two persons were killed. Sixteen persons, including some police personnel, were injured in the incidents.

In Agra, the day curfew has been lifted after an improvement in the situation. Night curfew, however, will remain in force as a precautionary measure.

Commentary Urges Rangoon To Recognize Elections

BK0301121791 Delhi General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 3 Jan 91

[Commentary by Kuldip Singh Arora]

[Text] The people and the government of India wish well to the people of Myanmar [Burma] on their National Day which falls on fourth of this month. The watchers of Myanmar cannot but help wish it peace and restoration of law and order and fulfillment of the aspiration of the people of Myanmar. India has always treated the coup, counter-coup, and fight for democracies by Burmese as their internal affairs and have always looked forward for peace and prosperity for them.

By arresting opposition leaders in an attempt to prevent the government in exile, the military regime of Myanmar has only indicated its refusal to see the writing on the wall. The eight-member coalition government set up under Sein Win at the Karen National Union Headquarters at Manerplaw on the Myanmar-Thai border cannot help the ruling military regime as much as if they had entered in a dialogue to sort out the problem in a more peaceful manner. At the moment, the arrests are likely to intensify the demand for democratic set up and it may also become easier for the international community to extend its moral and material support to the democratic movement spearheaded by Aung San Suu Kyi and others.

Already more than 3,000 lives have been lost since 1988 without bringing peace to the war-torn country. Democratic movements all over the world would wish the ruling military regime not to reject the verdict of the May 27 1990 election in which the National League for Democracy got elected 292 members out of 485 to the Myanmar parliament, polling more than 75 percent of the votes. In the contrast, the military sponsored National Unity Party won a mere 10 seats. Accusing India or the United State for the moral support to the pro-democrartic activists would neither deter Washington and New Delhi, nor help sort out the problem. The release of thousands of detainees, who have been languishing in the Burmese jails for years, would rather help restore peace in that country.

The improvement of relations between Myanmar and Thailand can also help sort out the Karen insurgency and the most needed foreign exchange for saving the sinking Burmese economy. The Burmese economy became bad, particularly after the stoppage of international aid due to killing of over 3,000 prodemocracy demonstrators from March to September 1988. Before the political crisis in July 1988, the foreign exchange reserves of Myanmar stood at U.S. 8 million dollars which tumbled to zero in October that year. Myanmar's foreign debt had by this time risen to almost U.S. 5 billion dollars and the debt

service ratio had reached a staggering 80 to 90 percent. The deteriorating economy came to a head in September 1987 when the government demonetized the Myanmar currency without compensation of high value currency notes which accounted for 60 to 80 percent of the country's currency. In fact, this was one of the reasons which sparked off the social unrest which became a mass movement in 1988 posing threat to the rule of General Ne Win since he seized power in 1962. The political uncertainty and the deteriorating law and order situation led to another military coup on September 18 by General Saw Maung and setting up of a new military council—the SLORC [State Law and Order Restoration Council].

The unrest in Myanmar is a natural cause of concern for India as the two countries share a border of more than 900 miles and India has close links with that country both in geographical and historical terms. The ruling princes of India's Northeast Frontier and those of Myanmar had maintained diplomatic, cultural and trade links. Even the British imperial power unified these two countries under one administration until April 1937 when Myanmar was separated from India. After independence both India and Myanmar continued to share a lot in common in their perception on regional issues. The five-year treaty of peace and friendship concluded on July 7, 1951 in Rangoon and a five-year trade agreement between the two countries signed in September, 1951 speak of the closeness of the relations between the two countries. The visit of the then Indian foreign minister, Mr. M.C. Chagla, in January 1967 helped in signing India-Burmese boundary agreement. The week-long visit of General Ne Win to India in February 1965 and the then prime minister, Mr. Lal Bahadur Shahstri's, visit in December 1965 followed by Mr. M.C. Chagla's visit to Rangoon in January 1967 did help improve relations between the two countries. Mrs. Indira Gandhi's four-day visit to Myanmar in March 69 and Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's two-day visit on December 15 1987 only speak of India's desire to strengthen bilateral relations and have closer understanding with Myanmar.

Iran

Leave Canceled for Forces on Iraqi Border

PM0201165391 London SAWT AL-KUWAYT AL-DUWALI in Arabic 30 Dec 90 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Iranian Forces' Leaves Canceled"]

[Text] Tehran—SAWT AL-KUWAYT has learned from informed Iranian sources that, following a meeting held Sunday, 16 December, attended by the Army and the Guards chiefs of staff and the air, ground, and naval forces commanders, as well as the Coast Guard commanders, the Iranian Armed Forces General Staff decided to cancel all leave for Army personnel stationed in the border areas adjacent to Iraq in Khuzestan Province, southern Iran, between 27 December and 25 January. SAWT AL-KUWAYT's sources indicate that the Revolution Guards' Sayyid al-Shuhada' Corps has been deployed alongside the regular armored Ahvaz Division 92, the Khorramabad Division, and Qazvin Division 16 in the Iraqi border area in Khuzestan Province.

Iraqi Official Arrives for Border Talks

LD0201111691 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] According to IRNA, Riyad al-Qaysi, director general of the International Affairs Department of the Iraqi Foreign Ministry, arrived in Tehran this morning for discussions concerning the POW's, pilgrimage to holy sites, and the border demarcation between Iran and Iraq.

Kuwaiti Amir Reportedly To Visit 'Soon'

NC0301110491 Paris AFP in English 1027 GMT 3 Jan 91

[Text] Tehran, Jan 3 (AFP)—Kuwait's exiled ruler, Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah, is due to visit Iran soon, the English-language daily TEHRAN TIMES reported Thursday but did not specify when the visit would occur.

The amir is expected here along with Kuwait's crown prince, Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Sabah, the daily said, quoting informed sources.

"The sources, who asked not to be identified by name, said that the dates of the arrival of the Kuwaiti leaders who are in exile now has not been fixed as yet but 'they will visit Iran soon'," the paper added.

Iran has condemned Iraq's August 2 invasion of Kuwait but equally blasted the presence of a U.S.-led multinational force massed against Iraq in the Gulf.

The Iranian government has said on several occasions that it does not intend to become involved in any eventual conflict in the region but Tehran radio reported Tuesday that the army and revolutionary guards are to hold major maneuvers near the Iraqi border starting January 11.

Foreign Affairs Official Departs for Qatar

LD0201115391 Tehran IRNA in English 1037 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 2, IRNA—Director General for Persian Gulf Department of the Foreign Ministry Mustafa Ha'eri-Fumani left here for Qatar today. He is carrying Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati's message for his Qatari counterpart Mubarak Bin-'Ali al-Khatir.

Fumani is to discuss promotion of Tehran's ties with the (Persian) Gulf Cooperation Council [(P)GCC] states as well as safeguarding the security of the Persian Gulf region with Qatar's ranking officials.

Qatar is the present rotating chairman of the (P)GCC.

Khamene'i Urges Marking Revolution's Anniversary

LD0101173891 Tehran IRNA in English 1611 GMT 1 Jan 91

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 1, IRNA—Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i on Tuesday called for celebration of the ten days of fajr (Dawn, February 1-11, marking the 12th anniversary of the Islamic revolution's victory) nationwide as splendidly as possible.

"In the ten days of fajr (Dawn) Islam was revived. This period is considered as a determining and unique point in the history of Iran," The leader of the Islamic revolution told officials in charge of celebrating the occasion.

On the relationship between the people and officials before and after the triumph of the Islamic revolution, Ayatollah Khamene'i remarked:

"There did not exist an Islamic system in Iran before the culmination of the Islamic revolution. The relation of kings with people was like that of a victor with a vanquished and a ruler with a subject. The kings felt as if they were conquerors who had vanquished the people."

The revered ayatollah also urged that the celebrations should be freshened with "correct emotional excitement... and mosques also should be activated."

Ayatollah Khamene'i also called on movie theaters and radio and television organization to broadcast and screen such programs that can suit the ten-day-dawn ceremonies and can be reminiscent of "the sweet memories of the revolution."

Besharati on War Prospects, Gulf Attitudes

NC2912113090 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 17 Dec 90 pp 1, 11

[M. Firuzi report]

[Text] Tehran—A senior official of the Foreign Ministry yesterday criticized the recent statement of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze in which he touched on the issue of a possible change in the political map of Iraq.

While visiting Ankara on Saturday the Soviet Foreign Minister said that in case of war there can be no guarantee that the borders of Iraq will remain the same.

"It (the change in the political geography of Iraq) will be harmful to the entire region," First Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati said.

In an exclusive interview with the TEHRAN TIMES he said, "So much so, it can even be assumed that the two superpowers have reached a suspicious agreement on the issue."

"Don't forget, if the idea of change in the political geography receives any encouragement whatever it would hurt the Soviet Union itself in the long run in the light of the present political turmoil in that country," Besharati said.

"As we have already announced at the beginning of the Persian Gulf crisis, we still firmly believe that we will oppose any change in the political geography if war starts," he said.

Referring to his earlier Saturday TEHRAN TIMES interview this reporter yesterday asked "Why have you ruled out the possibility of war a hundred percent?" and he said, "No, I never said that there was no possibility of war as result of the current Persian Gulf crisis."

"My logic is that the Republican presidents of the United States always remain under the influence of the Zionist elements and have always kept the interests of Israel above all," he said, adding that the Iraqi regime has now created a potential danger to the Israeli regime.

"In these circumstances, despite the fact that the U.S. has serious danger to encounter it will still embark on the war to destroy the war machine of the Iraqi regime," Besharati said.

"And secondly," he said, "the regional countries are bearing all expenses of the American forces including $2.5 billion by Kuwait and one billion dollars by Saudi Arabia."

"Naturally," he said, "the regional countries are expecting some sort of military adventure by the U.S. forces."

"If the U.S. remains impotent on this issue it will be loose confidence of many of these satellites of Washington," he said. [sentence as received]

He said that if such a situation arises, it will bring the prestige of the United States down in the region. "However," he said, "my personal view is that the possibility of the war is weak."

Editorial Criticizes Shevardnadze Statement

NC2912113390 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 17 Dec 90 p 2

[Editorial: "Shevardnadze's Territorial Equation a Fallacy"]

[Text] According to news agency reports, Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard A. Shevardnadze after talks with Turkish leaders in a press conference said Iraq's territorial integrity could have been guaranteed if it withdrew its forces from Kuwait, but now there can be no such guarantees.

These statements of Shevardnadze were made under conditions when the proposed trips of the Iraqi foreign minister to U.S. and the U.S. Secretary of State to Baghdad had been suspended. Once again tensions in the region have increased. So far it is not clear whether his statements reflect his personal views or the declared policy of Moscow. If the latter it is very unfortunate development and shows that the Soviet Union is not

interested in regional stability, because the other meaning of the Soviet foreign minister's statement would imply the disruption of the geographical map of the region.

In September 1980 the Iraqi regime attacked Iran, and Iran defended itself for eight years so that the geography of the region would not change and international conventions would also be defended. Similarly today Iraq's aggression against Kuwait is condemnable because any change in the region's geography is condemnable. The occupation of Kuwait is condemnable and so will be any changes in Iraqi frontiers in the event or aftermath of war.

There are many ways in which Baghdad can be punished so that any would-be aggressors would learn a lesson and not disturb world peace and stability. If any geographical changes take place in the region then we can certainly expect a third or fourth crisis. The first crisis was the Iran-Iraq war, the second crisis was the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, while a third crisis may be an Arab-against-Arab or Arab-against-Turk crisis. It is very difficult to predict the dimensions of such crises, which would also involve many other nations.

Therefore, we can say that Shevardnadze's statements were irresponsible and belong to the cold war era rather than the glasnost era of Mikhail Gorbachev.

Editorial Discusses GCC's 'Shocking Failures'

NC2912133390 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 22 Dec 90 p 2

[Editorial: "(P)GCC Is a Misnomer"]

[Text] With the present arrangement being what is, the (Persian) Gulf Cooperation Council [(P)GCC] is the last forum that can be expected to find a reasonable way to end Iraq's seizure of Kuwait. A decade of economic and mostly security alliance between the six-nation (P)GCC revealed itself in a disaster on Aug. 2 when Iraqi tanks rolled over the tiny land of Kuwait. The sudden demise of a co-member contributed greatly to the long-held belief that the council has achieved nothing since its inception.

Today the Amir of Qatar will host the annual (P)GCC summit conference. What the leaders of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar will come up with is a foregone conclusion—unconditional withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait and restoration of the al-Sabah rule. New formulas, recommendations or working solutions to grave problems are nowhere to be found in the (P)GCC charter. The fact that Kuwait was gobbled up within hours is enough indication that (P)GCC regimes have a narrow approach when it comes to facing hard core realities. The regime of Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah was lost because oil wealth and inflated sense of importance had blurred the vision of those who rule in the six Arab states.

The (P)GCC leaders were so engrossed in serving Western interests in the strategic region that they failed to realize how their subservience was inviting trouble in the immediate neighborhood. Iraqi President Saddam Husayn did take multi-billion dollars in loans and grants from the littoral Arab sheikhs and kings but never did anything to make his patrons feel easy. The (P)GCC's staunchly pro-Western character did put it besides Iraq during the eight-year-old Iran-Iraq fighting but only for convenience sake.

Saddam's Iraq was more often than not apprehensive about (P)GCC tendenices and was awaiting the opportunity to settle scores. After all the Iraqis had huge debts to repay. They did fight Iran with (P)GCC blessings, but the same backing was also responsible for placing Iraq in a miserable and agonizing situation. Everything remained intact in the (P)GCC states in the 1980s while Iraq had nothing to feel happy about. If Saddam had his way he would not hesitate to add the names of the other five vulnerable states to Iraq's list of provinces.

Obviously Saddam and his ruling Ba'th Party was never comfortable with its (P)GCC relations. Though the uneasiness remained veiled for a bettr part of the decade it was only a matter of time when President Husayn would turn against Persian Gulf royalty. And this he did in August without caring about its repercussions. The venture turned out to be risky not because of the (P)GCC power or ability to repel the invaders, but due to the fact that nearly half a million men, tanks, bombers and aircraft carriers have been brought from outside to safeguard the six-nation royalty.

Even a brief assessment of (P)GCC behavior will show that it is a sort of fear that brought the six together in a grouping that is of little significance in the political, security and military spheres. For the past 10 years only the world's major arms exporters have enjoyed doing business with the council. Dealing with six rich but dependent states in a single grouping has had its own dividends. When the real test came, everything fell apart and foreign armies had to be rushed in to protect Saudi King Fahd—supposed to be the strongest and most influential in the alliance.

Nevertheless the Arab rulers will go into session once again to find "just, comprehensive and lasting" solutions to the crisis in former Kuwait. It is difficult to imagine how those who themselves are living on borrowed time intend to restore Shaykh Jabir's rule.

(P)GCC leaders have done nothing to deserve the sympathy and support of other Muslim nations. Despite their wealth, resources and influence they failed to take care of one of their own, leave alone millions of oppressed and improverished Arabs and Muslims.

It is for the shocking failures and inability to cooperate and coordinate with the Muslim world that the council should adopt a resolution first to correct its name. The Persian Gulf Royalty Protection Council seems more

appropriate and will not mislead those who have seen nothing positive come out of the (Persian) Gulf Cooperation Council.

Papers View Approaching Deadline for Iraq

LD3012124590 Tehran IRNA in English 1132 GMT 30 Dec 90

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 30, IRNA—The Persian Gulf crisis has been turned to a strategic test for the U.S. foreign policy and a fateful point for the sovereignty of the Iraqi Ba'th party, said the editorial in 'KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL' daily Sunday.

With nearly two weeks let to the January 15 deadline set by the U.N. Security Council for Saddam Husayn to quit occupied Kuwait or face war, the propaganda war between Baghdad and Washington has reached its peak, the English daily said.

It added, "By issuing threats and adopting tough stands, Baghdad and Washington each are trying to force the other to retreat."

Referring to the U.S. efforts to covince Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait and restrict Baghdad's military strength through the imposition of sanctions, the paper believed. "This may even result in a change in the ruling system in Iraq." It also pointed to Saddam Husayn's effort to compel Washington to give some concessions to Baghdad and said, "if this is done, whether through ceding part of the Kuwaiti territory to Iraq or convening of an international conference on the Middle East, or agreement to hold a referendum to decide the fate of occupied Kuwait, Iraq would certainly be stabilized as the master of the Arab world.

"And if the U.S. succeeds in forcing Iraq out of Kuwait without giving it any specific concessions, Washington would obviously achieve a major political victory without having to suffer great losses.

"It is in fact this contrast of interests that has made it impossible for Iraq and the United States to reach a compromise and forge a moderate solution to resolve the Persian Gulf crisis."

The paper in conclusion predicted, "The U.S. is likely to engage in a war 'today' to prevent a broader confrontation 'tomorrow'. In that case, Iraq too would have no choice but to put up 'absolute resistance' to avoid 'humiliating defeat'."

Another morning daily 'ABRAR' editoralizing on the same subject, said that it is unlikely that a possible war in the region would be confined to the Iraqi territory and occupied Kuwait.

Stating that no exact forecast could yet be made on the future of the region, the daily believed that with outbreak of war, the situation in the region will certainly become more aggravated.

If immediate results are not achieved through a lightning attack on Iraq, the Persian Gulf and Middle East region will be turned into a highly difficult battlefield undesired by the West, the U.S. in particular.

The question is whether Baghdad will succeed in its efforts to renew the deadline so as to protect itself against the consequences of a war in which nothing is predictable, concluded the daily.

Paper Comments on Prospects for Gulf War

NC3012122390 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 17 Dec 90 pp 11, 2

[Unattributed commentary: "Will There Be War?"]

[Excerpts] Recent developments have complicated the Persian Gulf situation to the point where many observers now believe war is inevitable.

On the one hand, America is strengthening its military buildup. [passage omitted]

On the other hand, Iraq has also increased military preparations and has even begun enlisting non-Iraqi soldiers. Iraqi garrisons recently started training volunteers from unspecified Arab countries. [passage omitted]

At any rate, the two sides to the Persian Gulf conflict are showing their readiness for war. They are warming up their war machines, but are not taking any steps forward. Iraq claims it will not be the one to start a war, and that it is America, as the leader of the other side, that has always been the one to make threats. [passage omitted]

Events show that America is waiting for a favorable opportunity to launch a first strike, especially as its ability to retain its superpower title is largely dependent on the outcome of the Persian Gulf crisis. Therefore, the reason America is constantly repeating the countdown to the start of operations lies in that country's concern over the consequences of a protracted war.

Moreover, America does not have much confidence in its allies, which may well reverse their stands once the first strikes prove to be ineffective. At the same time, as the expiration of the Security Council's deadline to Iraq approaches, America sees itself at an extremely dangerous crossroads, with all paths fraught with unpredictable dangers.

Meanwhile, some observers of regional problems believe that the war preparations and war cries of the two sides are merely a facade. Even Libya believes that Iraq will emerge from the Persian Gulf crisis as America's friend. If this assessment is correct, the whole clamor about war is nothing but a propaganda ploy; a compromise will be worked out that will ensure America's presence in the region and its domination over the major energy resources and satisfy some of Iraq's objectives. If this happens, the crisis will take on another form, and the issue of Muslim opposition to the American usurping presence in the region will assume more serious dimensions.

At any rate, the escalation of war propaganda does not necessarily mean that war is near. The absence of such propaganda, however, does not mean that there is no danger of war. Whether there is a war depends first on how the crisis develops and, second, on how the two belligerent sides assess the possible consequences of such a war. In view of America's vulnerability in an uncontrollable crisis, the possibilty that America will start the war does not seem very strong. Thus, America may introduce other factors into the crisis in an effort to keep itself immune from the consequences of a war. By complicating the situation, it will warm itself at this fire from a safe distance.

Editorial on NATO Presence, Need for Alertness

NC3012104790 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 17 Dec 90 pp 1, 2

[Editorial: "Enhancing the Armed Forces Is a Sign of the 'Nation's Determination'"]

[Excerpts] Joint exercises by the three branches of the Islamic Republic's Armed Forces and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps began yesterday in the waters of the Persian Gulf, the Gulf of Oman, and the Indian Ocean. These joint exercises, code-named Victory-1, will continue for 12 days in an area some 1,000 km long and 200 km wide. [passage omitted]

In view of the complexity of the crisis in the region, the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as the major harbor of regional security, must strive not only to preserve their operational capabilities, but also to raise them to the highest level possible.

The region is currently confronted with the largest military expedition into the heart of Islam by its enemies since the crimes perpetrated during the Crusades. Deployment of troops and weapons in the region on such a scale is without precedent even in the two world wars. The world-devourers are trying to justify this enormous military buildup by talking about the need to confront the Baghdad regime's aggression. They are well aware, however, of the extent of Iraq's military capabilities and also of the large number of troops already in the region. Therefore, they must know that there was and is no need for a military expedition on such a scale to crush Iraq's war machine. Everything indicates that the main objective of the world-devourers is not to confront Iraq, but to justify and legalize the military presence of NATO armies in the heart of the Islamic world's oil-rich region and to contain the Islamic revolution.

It has been pointed out by some unofficial but reliable American sources that the goal is not to confront Iraq but merely to deploy NATO forces in the region.

In this context, the tremendous harm the corrupt Arab royal courts have inflicted on the world of Islam and Muslim dignity should be studied carefully. The abjectness of Arab reaction has altered regional conditions to the detriment of Muslim nations and the benefit of the arrogant powers, whose operational expenses in the oil-rich Islamic heartland are being defrayed with funds from the "Muslims' national wealth."

It is a great disgrace for the Islamic world that the costs of the treacherous operations by the NATO armies against the interests of the Muslims are being directly paid with funds taken from the Muslims' wealth. It is a great shame for the Muslim nations that their two holiest places—the al-Aqsa Mosque and the Holy Mosque [Ka'bah]—are under the heels of the enemies of Islam and that not only are no steps being taken to confront this situation, but even the costs of maintaining foreign domination over Islamic territories are being borne by the Muslims.

Under such conditions, it is the duty of the Muslim nations to do all they can to preserve their dignity and to elevate their combat and operational capabilities so that any development that could harm their dignity, capability, independence, and territorial integrity in any way is prevented or countered seriously and effectively.

In today's world, nations can only survive if they preserve their dignity and alertness. In today's world, nations can only survive if they are strong, brave, and alert and if they show firm determination to preserve their aspirations, principles, and dignity. The Iranian nation has shown its firm determination during the 12 years of its auspicious Islamic revolution and by having preserved the dignity and combat capability of the Islamic Republic's Armed Forces.

UK Urged To Show Goodwill To Improve Ties

NC2912120990 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 19 Dec 90 p 2

[Editorial: "Obstacles To Be Cleared in New Era of Irano-British Ties"]

[Text] On the eve of the trial of Iranian student Mehrdad Kowkabi in Britain, his wife and the Committee for Support of the Rights of Muslim Students have called on British judicial officials not to involve political antagonisms in his trial. Mrs. Kowkabi and a spokesman for the committee in a news program demanded that a "just" decision be taken in Kowkabi's case.

Kowkabi is charged with taking part in setting fire to several bookstores which were selling Salman Rushdie's blasphemous book "The Satanic Verses". The trial is scheduled to start on January 7, but unfortunately the Kowkabi issue has become a political one in relations between Iran and Britain.

In the past week Iran has received a message from new British Prime Minister John Major expressing the desire for the expansion of relations with Iran. Political circles believed that with the end of the era of "Thatcherism" in Britain new horizons in Irano-British relations may be opened.

But serious problems including the Kowkabi issue and the mischievous mistreatment of the Salman Rushdie affair by the British mass media (which naturally has led to reactions by Islamic circles) have become obstacles in the path of expansion of relations. These issues, moreover, have also become obstacles in the way of Iranian humanitarian efforts for securing the release of British hostages held in Lebanon.

Despite provocative actions by the British, Iran has allowed British spy Roger Cooper, who is imprisoned in Iran, to regularly meet with his family. In this connection, it has been learned that Cooper's brother arrived in Tehran yesterday and was due to meet him at 3 p.m..

From John Major's message, it is clear that Britain wants improved ties with Tehran, specially in respect to the current situation in the Middle East. Tehran welcomes this, but naturally all the obstacles in the way of expansion of bilateral relations should be removed.

Meanwhile claims made against Kowkabi have no base. Investigations carried out by Kowkabi's defense lawyers disprove the evidence claimed by the British police against him.

In the light of this fact, the results of his trial is thus seen as a real test to show whether the British have goodwill in their bilateral political relations with Iran.

Commanders Outline Changes in Guards Corps

LD2912133290 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 29 Dec 90

[Text] The Ground Forces of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps [IRGC] will be organized in such a way that if required, it can increase its military strength threefold by mobilizing the oppressed.

During a news conference this morning, two of the commanders of the IRGC Ground Forces outlined the new duties of these forces. They discussed the recent guidelines recently given to the IRGC by His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the commander in chief.

According to our correspondent, Mr. Izadi, commander of the IRGC Ground Forces, pointed to the fact that the formulation of the new duties of the IRGC occurred after 10 months of joint consultation and investigation between the experts of the IRGC Headquarters, commanders of IRGC, and the regular Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran within the framework of the views of the commander in chief. He said: within the framework of the new duties: the security and defense of the country from within its borders [as heard]; counteracting counter-revolutionary and anti-system provocations; guarding and defending public buildings, institutions, and sensitive areas in the country; organizing and mobilizing the 20 million strong army are all responsibilities of the IRGC Ground Forces. Furthermore, the IRGC Ground Forces will be organized in such a way that in an emergency, its organizations will transform from company to battalion, brigade to division, and division to operational corps. He added: In the near future, the IRGC Ground Forces will be equipped with the most modern military hardware such as tanks, armored personnel carriers, and artillery so that it can defend the borders of the Islamic homeland as well as confronting internal crises.

Furthermore, Mr. Afshar, commander of the resistance forces of the IRGC [title as heard], described the new duties of the said forces and pointed to the main duties of the Basij forces which are: The formation of a 20 million strong army; safeguarding personalities; confronting aircraft hijackers; defense of airports, public buildings, and institutions; and guarding sensitive areas within the country. He said: with the approval of the Supreme Cultural Council on the formation of student Basij forces, the Basij resistance forces will take steps toward the training and upkeep of the military might of all strata of the people including workers, farmers, seminarians, students, high-school students, tribesmen, and office workers for the formation of the 20 million strong army. For this purpose, the participation of the people, using resources and equipment of the IRGC, cooperation of the government, executive organizations, institutions, and guilds have been considered.

He described another part of the new duties of the Basij resistance forces by saying: The Basij resistance forces will also have an active role in the defense of the country's coastline and islands.

Water Shortfall Causes Power Cuts; Dams Low

LD0101090291 Tehran IRNA in English 0503 GMT 1 Jan 91

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 1, IRNA—Water saving in Tehran is now the lowest in 25 years, according to managing director of Tehran Water Department Mehdi Tafazzoli.

He said to reporters here yesterday that despite the heavy snowfall in northern and other parts of the country last week, water level at the Letian dam east of Tehran and at the Karaj dam west of Tehran is still below the average for the season since 1965.

The low level of water in the reservoirs of the two dams has been responsible for frequent power cuts in Tehran and occasionally other parts of the country during the past few days.

The daily volume of conveyable water from the Letian dam is 6.6 million cubic meters and from the Karaj dam 21.4 million cubic meters.

On Saturday Tehran consumed 1,559,396 cubic meters of water—1,202,220 cubic meters, that is 77 percent, of which was supplied from the two dams and the remainder from water wells.

In early December only 5 to 7 cubic meters of water flew into Karaj dam per second and four to five cubic meters per second into the Letian dam.

In December last year the water level at the Karaj dam was 1,733.02 meters which is now 1,717.79. [sentence as received]

Tehran weather bureau says the rainfall in Iran this winter is a record low for 30 years.

Further on Rainfall Shortage

LD0201173691 Tehran IRNA in English 1710 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 2, IRNA—Undeclared, fairly long power cuts on Tuesday and Wednesday have caused many problems in Tehran and several other cities. Despite an earlier warning by the Energy Ministry of a maximum power stoppage of two hours per day, the electricity supply to Tehran and some other cities was cut for more than three hours both yesterday and today. In Tehran, power cuts led to traffice jams and long queues at gas stations and bakeries.

In an interview published by the daily 'KAYHAN', an expert at Tehran's Electricity Department gave the reason of the blackouts as insufficient rainfall this year and the failure to provide fuel on time for the power stations. He was also quoted as saying that the shortage of liquified gas has forced the people to turn to electric heaters to warm their houses with the onset of heavy snow this month. The scanty rainfall has served to cut the output of the country's hydro-electric power plants by 30 percent, he added.

Earlier, the water organization officials had described as "unsatisfactory" the level of water reserves in the Latian and Karaj dams (east and west of Tehran), the two main reservoirs of drinking water for the capital.

RESALAT Reports on 28 Nov Majles Session

PM0201154691 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 29 Nov 90 p 5

[Excerpts]

Report on Yesterday's Open session of the Majles

Legal and Parliamentary section—The open session of the Majles was held yesterday morning chaired by Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Karrubi.

During this session, following comments made by deputies from Marivan, Miyandoab and Mashhad, the Majles went into session.

Below is the text of the pre-agenda speeches and the bills passed by the Majles.

Abdollah Tateli, People's Deputy from Marivan

America's trick against the Iranian people was defeated because of the revolution and the wishes of the great Khomeyni.

The first pre-agenda speaker at yesterday's open session of the Majles was Mr Tateli from the constituency of Marivan. He conveyed his greetings on the return of the heroic POW's and holy Defense Week and made a speech during which he said: It was the mobilization of the oppressed that broke down the enemy's organization. Yesterday, instead of Kuwait it was Islamic Iran which was attacked so as to open a foothold for the criminal United States (the great Satan). With the power of the mobilization of the oppressed the enemy's organization broke down. Yesterday the criminal United States provoked Saddam against the Islamic homeland. America's present trick was used against another nation in the past but because of the glory of the revolution and the wishes of the great Khomeyni and his might, it was defeated.

The trick of the United States has backfired. Of course we have condemned and continue to condemn the occupation of Kuwait and we want the unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi troops. But we also tell the world-engulfing United States to leave the area's soil especially the land of the Prophet before another Vietnam or another Islamic Republic enters the arena. The region's security will be ensured by the countries of the region themselves. Of course the crisis in the Persian Gulf and the widespread presence of the enemy, which is the Great Satan, in this sensitive region of the Persian Gulf and in the holy land where the message of God was delivered, has its own dangers. This danger faces us more than anyone else which is why we cannot remain quiet. Readiness to confront U.S. aggression in the region is a necessity and will cause damage if delayed. Our armed forces must maintain their readiness. Just as our great leader said our armed forces must keep their courage and their readiness to face the aggressors. The power and the greatness of our fighters must be a force for the defenders of Islam throughout the world especially in Afghanistan, Palestine, Egypt, Hejaz, and other areas. If God is willing the forces of Islam will note that God is waiting in hiding for the aggressor. [Koranic verse] [passage omitted]

During his speech he added: Today the people in the Middle East, especially the Muslims of the region, must learn from the Koran's orders. By using methods which will please God, relying on the never-ending power of the great God, by arming themselves with holy piety and faith (God is great) they should rise with unity. They should go forth and they should not be afraid of the many twists and turns, storms or waves in this path. They should then cut off the heads of the treasonous leaders of their countries, to overthrow them. They should fill the region and its devilish foreign forces with gunpowder. You should color the histories of your countries with your clean blood and bring back the dignity and identity of your nations which have been lost.

It is the duty of Muslim nations to hurry to one another's aid in any way possible to kick the world-engulfing United States out of the Persian Gulf region. For the pleasure of American soldiers who feast on dead bodies, the Arabs who have sold themselves, in a historic and shameful agreement (between the rulers of Egypt and

Hejaz), provide 10,000 Egyptian women, alcholic drinks from Jordan, and professional dancers, alongside the holy mosques. It is the duty of the 1 billion Muslims to rise when the things they hold as holy are disgraced, when the greatness of God's house is broken, and when the territory of God's message becomes insignificant, turning each of their bodies into bombs, machine guns, and fighter-bombers. Like the 13-year-old Iranian leader martyr Mohammad Hoseyn Fahmideh, they should rush at the heart of the foreign enemy to dry up forever the roots of cruelty in the world.

He continued: The Muslim peoples must rise up and send home these people who are like wolves and they should punish the rulers of the region who have sold themselves for what they have done. They should know that the revolt of the Muslims of the world against these inhuman acts of Husni Mubarak, Fahd, and the world-engulfing United States in the Middle East is a religious and holy duty. The Middle East is the land of prophets and the land of those who have broken pagan gods, from the Prophet Abraham to the imam of ummah—may his passage to paradise be expedited. It has been proved that the only enemy of Islam and Muslims and the oppressed people is the United States. Anywhere where it gains a foothold, it will stay and make it a colony. The savage nature of the United States has been proved to the world.

Asadollah Tabe': The Muslims of the World Recognize the American Presence Near the Holy Mosques as an Insult to the Things They Consider Holy and They Will Threaten U.S.Interests

[Asadollah Tabe' continues] Why, 45 years after the end of World War II has the United States still not taken its troops out of Japan, making life miserable for the people of that country, making that whole area insecure. All the land that has been occupied by U.S. military bases has been turned into rubble in a short period of time. The peoples of the world must know that wherever the Americans reach, they will destroy that place and they will make that area's people homeless. Because of the knowledge that the imam of ummah—may his passage to paradise be expedited—had of U.S. crimes, he said: "I warn all oppressed nations to unite and to cut off the hands of the United States from your countries." The people of Egypt should know that the disgraceful agreement to provide 10,000 women for the pleasure of the army of heretics is far worse and far more damaging than the Camp David agreement. The just punishment for signing the Camp David agreement resulted in the revolutionary execution of al-Sadat. The brave and Muslim people of Egypt should take Husni Mubarak and cut his head off in public with a guillotine and then throw his filthy body in front of rabid American dogs to be devoured.

Mr. Tabe' announced to the Muslim peoples of the Arab peninsula: The people of the Arab peninsula must know that the massacre of innocent pilgrims in the holy and secure mosque in 1987 and 1990 and the beheading of 16 Kuwaitis, without having documents to prove anything, by the puppet regime of Al Sa'ud was only to please Al Sa'ud and not for the purpose of strengthening the power of the Muslims. The peoples of Hejaz and Egypt have to ask Husni Mubarak: When you sell to foreigners our dignity and identity for the sake of an extra few days in a disgraceful life, what is it that we have that you want to defend?

The speaker added: The United States should know that just as it never understood our late imam, it is also incapable of understanding the great leader of the revolution, when our great leader shouts and springs forth like the imam saying: "We will not allow the Americans to gain a foothold in the region." Therefore if the United States thinks that it will only have to engage Saddam in the Persian Gulf and by insulting and throwing stones at the things held holy by Islamic culture, be able to loot the Muslims' vital resources, it is sorely mistaken. The Muslims of the world regard the U.S. presence alongside their holy sites as an insult to the things they hold holy. The U.S. interests will fall into danger anywhere in the world where there are Muslims.

Qorban 'Ali Saleh-Abadi, the People's Deputy from Mashhad

Adopting the policy of selling hard currency at competitive rates and the continued downward trend in the value of our national currency indicates the wrong calculations of our nation's financial officials.

The third and last pre-agenda speaker at yesterday's open session of the Majles was Mr. Saleh-Abadi from the constituency of Mashhad. He started his speech by commemorating the week of the Mobilization of the Oppressed and said: The government of Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani is now 15 months old, a government that during its introduction to the Majles was called the "working" government. The passing of this time allows one to analyze and examine the actions of this government.

He added: One of the basic and important policies which was announced by this government last year at the beginning of its work was the stabilization of the currency rates, with the aim of reaching an average level. This means that the stabilization of the value of currency and the fact that it reached an average value would cause the value of our national currency to group both inside and outside the country. One of the signs of a good economy, growth, and productivity is having a strong currency which has value in the world economic arena.

The speaker added: In this connection the minister of finance and economy and the governor of the Central Bank in their interviews with the media announced that with the new policies adopted there would be a desirable and stable economy and that the value of hard currency in the black market would gradually drop to a proper level. What has become obvious in the actions of the government during its life is a bitter truth that just the opposite of this policy and claim has occured. This means that the price of hard currency has not gradually gone up over the past 15 months. Because of the new

policy the national currency also continues to lose its value. This truth indicates the wrong policies made by those officials in the country who are in charge of the economy and those politicians in charge of financial policies. It is hoped that the respected president looks into this vital issue which has endangered many of his government's policies, and announces his findings to the people and to the Majles. Also, those in charge of financial policy in this country, especially the Central Bank, must give the people and the Majles a convincing and scientific answer to this question: Based on what financial formula was hard currency, which was officially valued at 75 rials last year, sold at 800 and 840 rials as competetive and public rates respectively in order to achieve a reasonable rate of currency?

He added: In reality, this new policy has lowered the value of the official and national currency by more than 1,100 percent. This same policy has also caused the price of various goods to go up—those goods whose raw materials are bought with hard currency at competitive rates. Keeping in mind the fact that the lower classes have a fixed income and in general for all those who receive a salary, this policy has decreased their purchasing power. Before they used to buy many of their necessities with hard currency valued at 75 rials.

Mr. Saleh-Abadi added: In the first half of 1989 when the government of Mr Musavi was in charge, the average price of hard currency at government rates was 75 rials. This rate was connected to the increase or decrease in the value of the U.S. dollar on the international currency markets. The average price of currency at competitive rates during the same period in the country was under 1,200 rials. This means that the price of currency on the open market was about 15 times higher than the government rates. In the current conditions the price of currency at government rates is about 65 rials because of the drop in the value of the dollar on the international money markets. The price on the open market has been fluctuating between 1,400 and 1,480 in the recent months. These rates show that during the first months of 1990, compared with the same period in 1989, the price of currency on the open market has been 23 times that of the official government rates. These figures show that during the first 6 months of 1990 compared to the same period in 1989 the price of hard currency has not gone down gradually, but rather it has gone up by 23 percent. This also shows another bitter truth and that is that the value of our national currency on the international markets has dropped by the same rate. A continuation of this trend could be very damaging for the future of the country's economy. It is necessary to stop as soon as possible those policies that have so far damaged the national currency as well as the wrong policies that have been adopted so far in this regard.

The deputy from Mashhad continued: The country's financial policymakers have to explain to the people and to the Majles how much hard currency has been sold on the open market in the country in the past 15 months and what effects this has had on the economy in general.

The minister of finance and economy in defense of the government's economic policies in the past few days has given speeches in the Majles as part of the 1990 budget bill. In this regard and in connection with the growth of retail sales of various goods throughout the country in the second half of last year and the first half of this year, he has not presented a very clear and proper opinion. It is worth noting that the activity of the previous government in this regard (sale of hard currency in the open market) in the first half of 1989 was about $25 million. However, there are some who speak of the activity of the new government with regard to the sale of hard currency on the open market and speak of figures 10 times the previous figures. It is necessary for the government to present clear and convincing answers in this connection to the people and to the Majles deputies.

The speaker continued by saying: The facts and figures that have been published by the Central Bank indicate a significant rise in the price of most goods throughout the country which comes as a result of the economic policies of the new government. In order to clarify issues in the public's mind, the appropriate officials should comment on some of these price increases.

The average wholesale price of iron and steel in August 1990, compared with the same period in 1989 during the previous government's time, shows a 220 percent increase, whereas during the same period this average between August 1989 and August 1988 showed an increase of 14 percent. The average wholesale price of building materials in August 1990 compared to the same period in 1989 shows an 80 percent increase. During the same period the wholesale price of metal building materials showed an increase of 101 percent compared with the prices in 1989. Manufactured goods, depending on their raw materials, show an increase of 54 percent in the same period. The same manufactured goods in August 1989, compared with the same period in 1988, showed an increase of 16.8 percent. Chemicals and petrochemical products in August 1990 compared with the same period in 1989 showed an increase of 19.4 percent, whereas there was an increase of only 1.2 percent for August 1989 over the same period in 1988. The average wholesale price of wool and cotton in August 1990 compared with the same period in 1989 shows an increase of 64.6 percent. This same average last year compared with the same period in 1988 (when we still had the war) shows an increase of 5.4 percent. The average wholesale price of various types of machinery and vehicles in August 1990 compared with the same period in 1989 shows an increase of 29.6 percent. The same average in 1989 compared with figures in 1988 shows an increase of 7 percent.

He added: The respected president announced at the Friday prayers in Tehran that the rate of inflation has gone down from 30 percent last year to eight percent in the current year. If this figure is correct it is in connection with the decrease in the retail price of some items which are usually imported using competitive rates of

exchange for hard currency, for example clothes, household goods, building materials and so forth which are more expensive than last year. As a result, demand has come down because of the lower classes' reduced purchasing power. This has caused an increase in the purchasing power of the rich and a lowering of prices for those items that are not all that necessary throughout the country. If the average wholesale price for goods comes down throughout the country, in economic terms it means that the classes with lower incomes have more purchasing power. Unfortunately, the facts and figures indicate policies which point to the fact that wholesale prices have gone up and that the buying power of the oppressed people and those in society with reduced incomes, who are the forerunners of the revolution, has been damaged and severely reduced.

Mr. Saleh-abadi continued: The increase in wholesale prices for all goods comes at a time when, unlike previous years when the government was seriously involved with the problems arising from the imposed war and the emergency funds needed for that, this government has been free from all that. The country's currency earnings have also increased. For example, the currency earnings of the country in 1986 was about $6 billion. In 1988 it was about $7.5 billion and in 1989 was about $12 billion. Only in March of 1990 there was about $5.5 billion in the Central Bank for the purchase of raw materials and necessary essentials to be used inside the country and there were letters of credit drawn from this sum. This was a sum close to the entire total for the year 1986.

If proper economic and financial policies were adopted by the government, after 15 months the people would have seen a flowering of the economy and the effects of anti-inflationary measures on various goods throughout the country. In reality unfortunately the people have seen the opposite of the important and vital outcome.

He added: According to a report received from the Central Bank the average increase in inflation for various goods in the wholesale market was 21 percent in the first six months of 1990 compared with the same period in 1989. Keeping in mind Footnote 22 of the law dealing with the Five Year Plan which asks the government to increase the purchasing power of civil servants, it is recommended that in the 1991 budget which is now under discussion in the cabinet, there should be an increase of at least 20 percent in the basic pay and bonuses of government civil servants in 1991.

The Bills Passed

The report filed by RESALAT's parliamentary correspondent from yesterday's open session of the Majles indicates that the report from the first round of discussions by the commission in charge of administrative and personnel affairs with regard to providing manpower for reconstruction in the war zones, was the first item on the agenda. This was discussed but following a vote it was rejected.

The second item on yesterday's agenda was a report from the first round of discussions by the commission for agriculture and rural welfare with regard to the legal plan on ways and means to prevent air pollution. Following speeches by deputies in favor of and against the proposals, the details of this plan were put to the vote and ratified.

A report on the first round of discussions by the commission in charge of revolutionary organizations with regard to a bill to provide an index of organizations and public and private offices was introduced as the next item on the Majles agenda. Following discussions and an exchange of views among the deputies, the bill was passed.

The fourth item on the agenda of yesterday's open session of the Majles was a report on the first round of discussions by the commission in charge of health and welfare with regard to ways and means of using the skills of inexperienced dentists who volunteer to serve in towns that do not have a dental college. Following comments by deputies for and against the plan, it was put to the vote but was not passed.

According to this report the open session of the Majles continued by looking into the credentials of the deputy from Fuman. Following a rejection at branch level, the matter was handed over to the research commission.

The Majles will have an open session next Sunday morning.

Pakistan

Shiites Demonstrate Over Iranian Envoy Murder

BK2212003890 Hong Kong AFP in English 1800 GMT 21 Dec 90

[Text] Multan, Pakistan, Dec 21 (AFP)—Shiite Moslems took to the streets in four Pakistani cities Friday to denounce the murder of Iranian Diplomat Sadiq Ganji, witnesses said. About 1,000 demonstrated here and hundreds of others held processions at Dera Ghazi Khan, Bahawalpur and Muzaffargargh, at the call of Shiite Party, Tehrik-i-Nifaz-i-Fiqah-i-Jafria, they said.

Mr. Ganji, 28, head of the Iranian Cultural Centre, was killed in Lahore, the capital of Punjab Province, on Wednesday outside a hotel where he was due to attend a farewell banquet in his honour.

The demonstrators chanted slogans against what they called a conspiracy by religious extremists to strain relations between Pakistan and Iran and fuel sectarian strife in the country, witnesses said. Many Iranian youths studying in Pakistan also took part in the rally here during which anti-United States slogans were shouted, they said.

Meanwhile Punjab police had reportedly arrested more than five suspects, including a man who reportedly tried to commit suicide before his arrest and was in a Lahore hospital. Police said the man was a key suspect.

Pakistan Foreign Secretary Shahryar Mohammad Khan said Thursday that Iran was sending experts to join the investigation.

Senator Qazi Hussain Ahmad, chief of the fundamentalist Jamaat-i-Islami, described the murder as a "conspiracy to create sectarian trouble" in the country and divert attention from "atrocities on Moslems in India and Kashmir."

Meanwhile, the Ajnjuman Sipah-e-Sahaba [spelling as received] (ASS), a Sunni fundamentalist group, issued a statement Friday condemning the murder.

ASS spokesman Maulana Ziaur Rehman Farooqi [name as received] said his organisation had no part in the murder and warned of "serious consequences" if ASS members were "wrongly implicated." Some mourners at mass prayers for Mr. Ganji in Lahore Thursday, shouted anti-ASS slogans, witnesses said.

Iran Denies Sending Commandos To Avenge Ganji

BK0201130791 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 2 Jan 91 p 1, 17

[Text] Islamabad, Jan. 1—The Iranian Embassy in Islamabad has denied the allegation levelled by an MNA [member of National Assembly] that Iranian commandos have entered Pakistan to kill him to avenge the murder of Agha Sadiq Ganji. The embassy in a statement issued Tuesday said: "With due regard we have the honour to draw your kind attention to a news published on page one of your esteemed Daily on Jan. 1, 1991, under the heading "The Commandos Are After Me"

Although oppressed martyr Ganji, forerunner of Vahdate Islami [Islamic Unity] joined the high domain but the Government of the brotherly country Pakistan has assured the concerned authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran that the cowardly killing of the dear martyred will be seriously taken up and as promised the relevant Pakistani authorities will follow up the case energetically through legal and diplomatic channels.

"It is, however, a matter of regret that people who feel guilty and frighten from their shadow spread the news of the arrival of Iranian commandos to take revenge so that by exploiting the situation they may expose and magnify themselves and tarnish the relatons of the two brotherly Muslim countries.

"It seems that the most judicious way is to depricate Forgiver God's wrath and keep ourselves away from the situation which will not provide any result and without least pressure allow the judicial and other authorities of Pakistan to bring the details of this crime to limelight. We also expect the respected Daily to abstain from inserting such baseless material. Heaven forbid the common enemy of the two Muslim nations may not endanger the solid, useful, constructive and brotherly relations of the two countries by making plots against them".

Iranian Envoy Meets Khan

LD2912131190 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 29 Dec 90

[Text] During a meeting with our ambassador in Pakistan at 1200 today, the Pakistani prime minister reiterated that the killers of martyr Sadeq Ganji, the official responsible for the Iranian Cultural Center in Lahur, should be punished. Once again expressing his regrets over the incident, Mr. Nawaz Sharif said The Pakistani Government is extremely upset about the dastardly assassination of martyr Ganji and has carried out an extensive investigation and achieved favorable results toward arresting the killers and the main perpetrators of the crime and will soon try them in a special court and punish them severely.

Referring to the existing needs for establishing friendly ties between the two nations of Iran and Pakistan he said: We consider the Islamic Republic of Iran a powerful country with a determining role in the region. We are in favor of expanding very close ties with Iran in all fields.

He also referred to his forthcoming trip to our country. He said that as head of the Pakistani Government he would do his best to expand fraternal ties with Iran, and that during his trip to Tehran and his meetings with our country's officials he would review the grounds for such cooperation.

Talks With Iran, Turkey on Gulf Begin

Iran's Velayati Arrives

LD0201114191 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Excerpts] [Text] Mr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati, minister of Foreign Affairs of our country, who arrived in Islamabad at noon today at the head of a delegation to take part in the tripartite meeting of the ministers of foreign affairs of Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan to discuss the Persian Gulf crisis, once again reemphasized the impartial stance [mowze'e-e bitarafi] of the Islamic Republic of Iran toward the Persian Gulf crisis. He announced: As before, the Islamic Republic of Iran still regards peaceful means as the best way of solving the Persian Gulf crisis and will direct all its efforts toward this end.

Referring to the need for an immediate solution of Persian Gulf problems by the regional countries, Mr. Velayati said: In our view at this sensitive juncture, cooperation among friendly countries is of utmost importance. [passage omitted]

It should be added that during his two-day official visit to Pakistan, the foreign minister of our country this afternoon in addition to holding various talks with Mr. Sahabzada Yaqub Khan, Pakistan's foreign minister, will also meet and hold talks with the president and prime minister of that country. Tomorrow morning the official meeting of the foreign ministers of Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan will officially open.

Khan, Velayati Discuss Gulf

LD0201215591 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2030 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] Our country's foreign affairs minister, who is currently visiting Pakistan, this evening met with Ghulam Ishaq Khan, the president of Pakistan. Our correspondent has sent a report from Islamabad to which we listen together:

[Unidentifed correspondent] Mr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati, our country's foreign affairs minister, is visiting Pakistan in order to participate on the tripartite meeting of the foreign ministers of Iran, Pakistan and Turkey. Tonight we met and conferred with Pakistani President Ghulam Ishaq Khan.

In the meeting, apart from issues of bilateral interest, regional problems, the current developments in the [Gulf] region, the need for a collective action by the countries of the region to establish security and stability, and also the proposal of our country's foreign affairs minister pertaining to the holding of an extraordinary session of the Islamic Conference Organization to discuss the crisis in the Persian Gulf, were discussed and views were exchanged.

Mr. Ishaq Khan, stressing the present sensitive juncture and the holding of the tripartite meeting, announced satisfaction with the progressive trend of cooperation between the three countries of Iran, Turkey and Pakistan, the first steps of which were taken in Tehran.

The president of Pakistan also expressed condolences for the loss of martyr Ganji, the official in charge of our country's cultural house in Lahore, and referred to the necessity to remove obstacles in the way of expanding bilateral relations. He said: All persons who were involved in the killing of martyr Ganji will be tried and punished.

Dr. Velayati also thanked the Government of Pakistan for the actions which have been taken, and called for firm measures to be taken against the perpetrators of that crime.

Our country's foreign affairs minister also referred to the Persian Gulf crisis and the extensive threat facing the countries of the region. He called for the collective cooperation of all countries of the region in order to resolve the crisis.

The president of Pakistan also supported and agreed with a collective action to be taken by all Islamic countries in order to peacefully solve the Persian Gulf crisis.

Khan-Velayati Talks Reviewed

BK0301081391 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 3 Jan 91

[Text] President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati have exchanged views on the latest Gulf situation and have stressed the need for a peaceful solution of the crisis. The Iranian foreign minister called on the president in Islamabad yesterday. They exchanged views on bilateral relations and other matters of mutual interest. The president and the Iranian foreign minister have expressed the hope that the meeting of the three foreign ministers will further strengthen the Economic Cooperation Organization. The prime minister said Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey should work with the Islamic world to solve the Gulf crisis. Mr. Nawaz Sharif was holding talks with an Iranian delegation led by Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati who called on him in Islamabad last evening. The prime minister said if we could do some solid work against bloodshed and destruction it would be a great service for the nation and Islam. He said that I am waiting for my upcoming visit to Iran which will help to further strengthen the brotherly relations between Pakistan and Iran. The Iranian foreign minister expressed hope that the Pakistani prime minister's coming visit to Iran and his talks with the Iranian leaders will help a lot to improve relations between the two countries.

The two-day meeting of foreign ministers of Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey begins in Islamabad today in which the gulf situation, the Gulf Cooperation Council, and cooperation among the member countries of the Economic Cooperation Organization will be considered. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif will inaugurate the meeting. Radio Pakistan's diplomatic correspondent has described the meeting as very important because the three countries will take a mutual stand on the Gulf situation. Iranian and Turkish foreign ministers are already in the capital to attend the meeting.

Talks Commence

LD0301105991 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 3 Jan 91

[Text] The session of the foreign ministers of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey to examine the Persian Gulf crisis convened this morning in Islamabad with the remarks of the Pakistani prime minister and the presence of high-ranking officials and ambassadors of the three countries.

The session, which followed up the issues debated in the previous session in Tehran, once again emphasized a peaceful solution to the Persian Gulf crisis.

Prime Minister Comments

BK0301104791 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0900 GMT 3 Jan 91

[Text] Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has called upon the international community to make all possible efforts for a peaceful settlement of the Gulf crisis, in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions. He was inaugurating a one-day meeting of Pakistani, Iranian, and Turkish foreign ministers in Islamabad today. The prime minister said that the security of the Gulf should be the responsibility of the regional and Gulf Cooperation Council member countries. He said that the Economic Cooperation Organization member countries—

Pakistan, Iran and Turkey—can hold consultations to enhance their mutual cooperation and to adopt an identical stand on regional security. Pakistan believes that restoration of Kuwait's sovereign, independent, and nonaligned status will be a clear indication that the international community is determined to uphold the principles of sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity, and nonuse of force in interstate relations.

Nawaz Sharif expressed his satisfaction that Pakistan, Iran and Turkey have adopted a principled stand on the Gulf crisis. Pakistan understands that Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and aggression on it contradict the UN Charter and the Islamic Conference Organization principles. It constitutes a brazen violation of the international principles and the norms of interstate relations. He warned that if the international community accepts Iraq's annexation of Kuwait, then the small and vulnerable countries will be left at the mercy of their more powerful neighbors.

Later, Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan in the beginning of his speech said that we will hold talks on the fast-changing situation in the Gulf and will assess the ways to contribute to the efforts for peace and security in the region.

Talking to newsmen in Islamabad this morning, Iranian Foreign Minister, Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati, stressed complete restoration of Kuwait's sovereignty, and said that we will not allow the aggression to succeed.

Turkish foreign minister Ahmet Alptemocin in his brief chat with newsmen said that Turkey will not take part in the war if his country is not attacked.

Turkey's Alptemocin Remarks

TA0301115691 Ankara Domestic Service in Turkish 1100 GMT 3 Jan 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Ahmet Kurtcebe Alptemocin, who is in Pakistan on an official visit, has said that unless attacked, Turkey will not participate in a war that might break out in the Gulf. Replying to reporters' questions in Islamabad, Alptemocin said that the NATO mobile forces to be deployed in Turkey are for defense and deterrence purposes. He also expressed the belief that the diplomatic initiatives of the European Community regarding the Gulf crisis will prevent a war.

Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, who is also in Islamabad, said that Iran will remain impartial in the event of a war in the Gulf region. The foreign ministers of Turkey, Pakistan, and Iran, all member countries of the Economic Cooperation Conference [ECC], have convened within the framework of the ECC.

In an opening statement, Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said that relations between the three countries are based primarily on economics and that this cooperation might extend to the field of defense as well in the future. On the Gulf issue, he said that Iraq should withdraw from Kuwait unconditionally, in accordance with the UN resolutions.

Alptemocin was received by Nawaz Sharif. Later, the delegations of the three countries, headed by the foreign ministers, began the ECC talks.

Iran's Velayati Meets With Afghan Mujahidin

LD0301110391 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 3 Jan 91

[Text] Some of the leaders of the Afghan Muslim mujahidin based in Pakistan met and held talks with Dr. ['Ali Akbar] Velayati, our country's foreign minister, in Islamabad today.

According to IRNA, in this meeting, Mr. Velayati once again stressed the support of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the Muslim people of Afghanistan in their struggle for their rights.

In this meeting, Mr. Sebghatullah Mojaddedi gave a report to Mr. Velayati on the discussions held concerning the continuing work of the Committee for the Investigation and Propagation of the Political Affairs of Afghanistan that was recently formed in Tehran following an agreement between mujahedin leaders.

Foreign Minister on Indian 'Propaganda'

BK3112162090 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1600 GMT 31 Dec 90

[Text] The foreign minister, Sahabzada Yaqub Khan, has said Pakistan is alert and countermeasures have been invigorated to frustrate Indian subversive designs, operations of hostile agents and to protect vital points and sensitive targets against any sabotage or damage. He was speaking on an adjournment motion in the Senate sought to be moved by Professor Khurshid Ahmed inviting the government's attention toward malicious propaganda being carried out by All India Radio directed at Sindhi population in Pakistan.

The foreign minister assured that the government is not oblivious of the dangers of such propaganda as apart from the security threats, it also affected law and order situation and every effort will be made to protect ourselves against these dangers.

Sahabzada Yaqub Khan said Pakistan had been taking up this issue with the Indian Government from time to time. These matters, including interference in our internal affairs in Sind, were also discussed during the recent meeting at foreign secretaries level. He said we had consistently called upon India to put an end to hostile propaganda from the state-controlled All India Radio and this subject will be raised more forcefully during the next round of foreign secretaries meeting in February.

The foreign minister informed the house that India has engaged in this propaganda campaign in Sindhi language since 1985 projecting subversive themes to instigate the local population to rise against the lawful authority. He said recently not only frequency of such propaganda had been increased, but also its tone had become more offensive.

After the foreign minister's statement, the mover did not press its motion.

Assembly Views Economy, U.S., USSR Ties

BK0101165891 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1600 GMT 1 Jan 91

[Excerpts] The National Assembly tonight concluded its discussion on the president's address on the 8th of November to the joint session of parliament and adopted a motion expressing its deep gratitude to him for the address. [passage omitted]

The Finance Minister Mr. Sartaz Aziz, replying to the economic aspects of the debate, said the package of economic reforms [is] being launched by the government to accelerate the rate of growth, improve the lot of the common man, reduce unemployment, and set the country on the path of self-reliance. He said due to various short-term measures already taken by the government, prices of essential commodities have shown signs of stabilizing and the rate of inflation is expected to be arrested at the level of the beginning of the financial year. He said the increase in oil prices was unavoidable and spelled out short-term measures, including one-third increase in the export target to bridge the gap [of the trade deficit]. The foreign exchange reserves have gone up from 100 million dollars when the government took over to 275 million dollars. The low-income group employees have been given various reliefs, while the revised pay scales of others would come in due course.

Replying to various points relating to the foreign policy raised by members, Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan assured that the government would safeguard nationals' interests in foreign affairs as a proud and soverign nation and would not bow down under any pressure. Referring to Pakistan's relations with the United States, he said these were passing through a difficult stage owing to the non-certification under the Pressler Amendment and the consequent cutoff of military and economic aid. He said Pakistan is in the process of trying to resolve its differences on the nuclear issue with the United States, but on no occasion would it compromise its independence of action or national interests. He said Pakistan does not believe that the policy of non-proliferation could be achieved by legislations, but the root for nonproliferation is to be found in the decisions by individual nations to act with maturity, prudence, and wisdom. The foreign minister said Pakistan is (?sure) that it has acted with responsibility on this issue. It has not manufactured a nuclear device, nor made a nuclear explosion. It has not shared its technological advances in the (?question) with another country. The answer to the problem lies in a regional solution.

Turning to Afghanistan, he said Pakistan is consistent in its commitment to a political settlement of the Afghan question.

Sahabzada Yaqub Khan said Pakistan earnestly desires to expand its relations with the Soviet Union and believes that this desire is warmly reciprocated.

On Kashmir, he said the people of occupied Kashmir are waging heroic struggle against Indian occupation which is purely indigenous. He said we seek a peaceful and honorable solution of the Kashmir issue which takes into account the wishes of the people by implementing UN resolutions on the subject.

On the Gulf, he said Pakistan strongly opposes the acquisition of territory by force and believes that interstate disputes should be settled by peaceful means in accordance with the UN Charter. He said Pakistan condemns the Iraqi aggression and demands that Iraq must withdraw and legitimate government of Amir of Kuwait should be restored.

UK Parliamentarian Berates Indian Kashmir Policy

BK0201163091 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1600 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] A member of the British Parliament, Mr. Mark Fischer, has called on the Indian Government to settle the Kashmir issue in accordance with the UN resolutions and also fulfill its commitment holding the plebiscite in the occupied territory. Addressing a news conference in Lahore this evening, Mr. Fischer, who is also a member of the shadow cabinet of the Labor Party said that his party had a clear and just stand on this vital issue and had given policy statements on various occasions on Kashmir issue. He said that India was clearly violating the human rights in the occupied territory which he condemned. Mr. Fischer said that he visited camps in Azad Kashmir yesterday and was shocked to see the conditions of the refugees coming from across the border. He said after going back to his country, he would bring it to the notice of the Indian high commissioner.

Bhutto Rules Out Compromise on Reform Issues

BK2412113990 Lahore THE NATION in English 24 Dec 90 p 1, 8

[From Aqeel Ibrahim]

[Text] Hyderabad—Former Prime Minister and leader of the Opposition in National Assembly Ms Benazir Bhutto has called upon the lawyers to struggle for the electoral reforms in the country so that the people's rights are no more trampled by the usurpers and oppressors.

She was speaking at a reception given in her honour by Peoples Lawyers Forum [PLF] in a local hotel on Sunday

evening. She said that her government was dismissed on the charges that we were not able to deal with the issues like Kashmir and Afghanistan according to the national interest of the country, but what has the IJI [Islami Jamhoori Ittehad] government done in this regard, she asked.

Dilating upon the prevailing situation in the country, Ms Benazir said that thousands of political workers were being detained under MPO [Expansion Unknown] the black law that was not in vogue during PPP [Pakistan People's Party] rule. 1500 political workers are being under this law only in Sindh Province, she added. She said such tactics cannot suppress the voice of the people.

Taking exception to the austerity move of the government, she alleged that Sindh Chief Minister Jam Sadiq Ali spent Rs one crore in arranging a reception party for Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in Sanghar.

Recalling the 20-month rule of the PPP, she said that they inherited enormous problems, however, her government tackled them with the best of their ability. Banks profit rates were raised to 70 percent and inflation went down to 60 percent, she said, and added self-reliance could not be achieved until there is a sincerity of purpose.

Dwelling on general elections, she said massive rigging was done in Sindh and Punjab in scientific manner. However, the people of Sindh even then reposed their confidence in the Peoples Party for which they deserve appreciation, she added.

Opposing the repatriation of stranded Pakistanis, [from Bangladesh] she said that before the dismemberment of the country, the Biharis were leading the first class citizens' life, however, after the separation they were relegated to second class and hence they are now crying for repatriation to Pakistan. She further said that their repatriation plan should be immediately put off until all the four provinces of the country do not arrive at a consensus in this regard.

Calling Jam's government in Sindh as 'imported and supported by Islamabad and Azizabad', Ms Benazir said that it has unrepresentative character with an unholy support from Islamabad and Azizabad. PDA [Pakistan Democratic Alliance] MPAs [Members of Provincial Assembly] were kidnapped and kept in Chief Minister House and they were forced to support the chief Minister of the province. She said: 'We are at a loss to understand as to whether the country is being ruled by the President, Military or Parliament'. We oppose dictatorship in whatever from it may appear, she emphasised.

Talking about disqualification campaign she said nothing can isolate the PPP and its leaders from the people. Such vindictive and threatening gimmicks could not impel us to submit, she added.

She rebutted the news about her compromise with the government on any point and emphatically said that she would continue struggling for the cause of peoples' rights and democracy in the country.

She said that the height of victimisation could be judged from the fact that even judiciary was not spared.

Earlier, the President of Peoples Lawyers Forum, Abdul Majid Bhatti welcomed the former Prime Minister and complained that during the PPP rule the members of the PLF were ignored, but even they have full confidence in her leadership, he added.

Ms Benazir Bhutto was accompanied by former Sindh Chief Minister Syed Qaim Ali Shah, former Ambassador Abdul Majid Khanzada, Syed Ali Nawaz Shah, Sattar Kazi and others.

Sri Lanka

President Concerned About Nationals in Gulf

BK0201123991 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 2 Jan 91

[Text] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs says in the current uncertain situation in the Gulf the president is most concerned about the welfare of Sri Lankans employed in the Middle East. Referring to a news item that appeared in the SUNDAY OBSERVER of the 30th of December 1990, the Foreign Ministry points out that despite all facilities being extended to Sri Lankans in Kuwait to return to their motherland, there appears to be a substantial number of Sri Lankans who have decided to stay back irrespective of the consequences.

According to informed sources, the turn of events in the Gulf in the near future is unpredictable. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is in constant touch with the Sri Lankan diplomats and consular representatives in the region to closely monitor the situation on a daily basis.

The Government of Saudi Arabia has given an assurance that it will undertake the responsibility of looking after the expatriate workers serving there, which include about 100,000 Sri Lankans. The embassies and consulates of Sri Lanka in the region have been instructed to give every possible assistance to Sri Lankans who may desire to make arrangements to send their families to their motherland or to safety zones in the region.

Officials Say Saudis Will Look After Foreigners

BK0101170491 Hong Kong AFP in English 1650 GMT 1 Jan 91

[Text] Colombo, Jan 1 (AFP)—Saudi Arabia has given assurances it will look after the hundreds of thousands of foreign nationals employed in the kingdom amid rising fears of a Gulf war, Sri Lankan officials said Tuesday

"The Government of Saudi Arabia has given an assurance that it will undertake the responsibility of looking after the expatriate workers presently serving there,

which includes about 100,000 Sri Lankans," a Foreign Ministry statement here said.

Hundreds of thousands of nationals from other Asian countries, including India, Pakistan and Philippines, are also working in Saudi Arabia.

Describing the situation in the Gulf as "unpredictable," the Foreign Ministry said it was keeping in constant touch with the Sri Lankan missions there to "closely monitor the situation."

The state-run SUNDAY OBSERVER quoted Labour Minister G.M. Premachandra as saying the government had advised Sri Lankan nationals employed in the Gulf to return home immediately but that the response to Colombo's appeal had been negligible.

The report, which was denied by some Sri Lankan diplomats in the United Arab Emirates, quoted Mr. Premachandra as saying that if the workers did not return home by January 15, "we will be faced with a very grave situation."

January 15 is the deadline given by the United Nations for Iraq to quit Kuwait or be ousted by force by a U.S.-led multinational force.

The Foreign Ministry statement said that President Ranasinghe Premadasa was "most concerned" about the welfare of Sri Lankan workers in the Middle East, especially in Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates and Qatar.

More than 300,000 Sri Lankans are currently working in the Middle East. Nearly 100,000 Sri Lankans employed in Kuwait were evacuated by Colombo a few weeks after Iraq's August 2 invasion of its neighbour. Some 5,000 Sri Lankans chose to remain.

"The government is concerned that despite all facilities being extended to our nationals in Kuwait to return to Sri Lanka, there appears to be a substantial number of Sri Lankans who have decided to stay back, irrespective of the consequences," the statement said.

"We also understand that the Government of India has advised its nationals in the region to send back their families, if they so desire, at their own expense. Sri Lankans may wish to do likewise," it said.

The ministry statement added that some Sri Lankans in the Gulf "may be in a position to request their employers assist in sending their dependents either to Sri Lanka or to safety zones in the region itself."

The ministry added that "it is the sincere hope of the Sri Lankan Government that the situation in the Gulf will be resolved in a peaceful manner."

Sri Lankans working in the Gulf contribute significantly to Colombo's foreign exchange reserves through hard currency remittances. The return of thousands of workers from Kuwait has badly affected Sri Lanka's already battered economy.

President on Gulf, Terrorism's Effect on Economy

BK2312123690 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 23 Dec 90

[Text] President Ranasinghe Premadasa says he will not exceed the powers vested in him under the Constitution to intervene or influence the course of the legislature or judiciary. He was speaking at the UNP [United National Party] National Executive Committee meeting at Sirikota, the party headquarters, yesterday. He pointed out that he will serve all sections of the people for justice and fair play, considering the whole country as a single electorate. The alternative proposed by the ruling and opposition parties will also be considered in the discharge of his duties. Four important proposals that emerge at the all-party conference will be placed before the UNP conference to be held today for approval.

The president pointed out that all representatives of the people should go up to the gramaseva [village office] division level and take measures to implement development programs. It is their duty to work toward the upliftment of people living in distant and remote villages as well as in urban areas. The president recalled the dedication shown by the people of this country in protecting democracy by using their right to vote in the midst of threats and obstacles during the recent terror campaign. A tribute will be paid to them every year regardless of party differences. The rate of growth which had declined to 2.3 percent has now reached 5.2 percent and it is the endeavor of the government to raise the rate of growth to eight percent.

The president pointed out that it would be a big achievement to reach the targeted growth. Paddy production has increased by 23 percent and the area harvested has increased by 18 percent. Rice imports this year declined to 212,000 metric tons. Tea production has recorded a growth of 28 percent, while tourism recorded a similar growth this year compared to 1988. The third round of janasaviya [poverty alleviation program] will be started in October next year.

The president said the price of oil doubled following the Gulf crisis. In the circumstances, the government had to incur an additional expense of 1,600 million rupees. The remittances by Sri Lankans employed abroad also plunged by 1,600 million rupees. The loss of revenue from the tea exports following the Gulf crisis was in the region of 800 million rupees.

The president spoke at length on defense and rehabilitation cost. He said the defense expenditure this year is in the region of 17,600 million rupees. A sum of 1,600 million rupees was spent on the provision of food and

other needs of refugees. Damage to public property resulting from JVP [Janata Vimukthi Peramuna, People's Liberation Front] terrorism amounted to 10,000 million rupees. He said that the cost to government property due to LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorism amounted to 5,000 million rupees. This was in addition to the losses suffered by the production sectors in paddy, fisheries, red onions, chillies, and the (?like). Expenditure has been reduced significantly over the past few years following the government's new program to eliminate corruption and waste.

The president said that the responsibility of all parties is to establish a coalition which can safeguard democracy.

The minister for plantation industries and state minister for defense, Ranjan Wijeratne, commenting on the security situation said that a peaceful atmosphere was prevailing in the country, except in the north and the east, but they are confined to jungle areas from where the LTTE terrorists are engaged in sabotage. The civil administration is functioning in Trincomalee, Batticaloa and Ampara Districts. Mr. Wijeratne said that the number of police officers will be increased.